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OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS

OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS

BY

JAMES INGLIS

("MAORI"),

AUTHOR OF "SPORT AND WORK ON THE NEPAUL FRONTIER," ETC.

London

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1880

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PREFACE.

WHY was this book written? Principally to satisfy the questionings of many friends in India and the old country, who continually write me such queries as these:—How do you like Australia? Would you advise me to come out? Is it healthy? Is there any sport to be had? Are the people really nice? Could a man, with a small income and a large family do anything out there? and so on. I have honestly tried to detail my own experiences in such a way, that they shall be usefully suggestive to my friendly catechists and others like them, and yet be sufficiently interesting to command the suffrages of the general reader.

I do not profess to be a polished writer. The graces of my style are perhaps conspicuous by absence, yet I would have the critic know, that I have no opportunity of correcting proofs. Add to this that my book has been written mostly on holidays, and late into the night, after an active day's duty in the city, when both hand and brain are somewhat jaded. It has required no slight sense of duty, and a desire to do some public good to keep me up to my self-appointed task.

I have incorporated letters that I wrote to *The Pioneer* when acting as special correspondent for that

paper, and I have tried to write naturally, truthfully, and as I felt; where I have made extracts from newspapers and books, I have acknowledged the obligation, and here again thankfully do so to my unknown friends in council.

It may be asked what acquaintance I have with my text, and whether I am competent to speak as a critic, when I refer to colonial social manners and customs, politics, institutions and peoples. I can only say that I have been a colonist since I was about eighteen years of age. In New Zealand, I was by turns cadet on a sheep-run, gold-digger, travelling agent and general utility-man, turning my hand to what first presented itself, for I was young and ardent, and willing to work and did work hard. In India I was for twelve years Indigo planter and manager of large estates. Since I returned to the antipodes, I have been journalist, traveller, special correspondent, newspaper manager, and am now secretary of an insurance company. I claim therefore as a traveller, and an observant man, to know something about the colonies. The success of a former book, and the very favourable criticisms it received, has emboldened me to commit this present volume to the winds and waves of public opinion.

I honestly love Australia. It has become a healthy, happy home to me, after I had been given up by my medical friends as almost a hopeless case. I like the Australian people—the young people especially—and I want my book, if they read it, to do more than merely amuse, I want it to awaken thought. They will find here, written by no unfriendly hand, with no bias or prejudice, the opinions of a cosmopolitan. I have spoken strongly on colonial public life, and

public men, and public measures, but not more so than the subject deserves.

The future of Australia lies in the hands of her young men. If they use the mighty power they possess, and send the right men to their parliaments and councils, and purge them of corrupt government, and look on things with a wider and more comprehensive vision; say less, and act more, in fact: act righteously and honestly and loyally, and if my pages of sporting recollection, scenic description, and straightforward criticism, shall conduce in the least degree to this result, I shall think my night oil has burned to good purpose.

I am under great obligations to Mr. R. Scott of Newcastle, for fishing and shooting notes, and to Dr. S. T. Knaggs of the same city for much kind assistance, and to Mr. G. Ranken, "Capricornus," for much counsel and kindly help.

JAS. INGLIS.

STRATHFIELD, SYDNEY, N.S.W.,
1*st August*, 1879.

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OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS

OUR AUSTRALIAN COUSINS.

CHAPTER I.

A Retrospect—I start from Calcutta—Our steamer and cargo—Down the bay—Penang—The couree festival.

For many years I had braved the burning heats of Hindostan, and borne a by no means inactive part in "the burden and heat of the day," incident to a planter's life in our Eastern Dependency. Several years of incessant exposure in very unhealthy districts had at length told their inevitable tale; and early in 1875 I was fain to turn my steps homeward to the old parent nest, to try the restorative effects of the "caller" Scottish air among my dearly loved native Grampians.

Any one who has lived in India for over twelve years finds it difficult to settle down comfortably elsewhere. On the voyage home I was not half careful enough of myself; I did not make enough allowance for the differences of temperature between the Koosee *Diarahs* (plains) and the chops of the channel. The quick sudden changes and exigencies of a Scottish spring and summer proved too much for my relaxed and enervated frame, and a complication of rheumatic disorders set in, shortly after I arrived at home, which rendered a

speedy return to the more congenial Indian heat an advisable step. So said the doctors.

It was hard to tear myself away from the grand old heather-clad hills—the sparkling burnies with their silvery trout, and the homely, kindly hands and hearts of kith and kin; but there was no help for it. Barely four months at home, I was compelled to bid a reluctant adieu to old Scotland, and set my face once again towards the East.

The trip home seemed to have done me little good. My rheumatic tendencies became more pronounced the nearer we approached the sultry shores of Ind. On arrival at Calcutta I had to undergo several severe surgical operations, and at length, when not nearly recovered, I accepted sole charge of some very extensive Government Grants of Waste Lands in Oudh and the North-west Provinces, and set out to survey the scene of my future labours, though weak, reduced, and scarcely able to crawl.

My new home was away up in the north-west corner of Oudh, about thirty-four miles from Shajehanpore, and the grant was located in the midst of wild, untilled jungle country. There were few villages, and little cultivation contiguous; and the locality bore the reputation of being the very haunt and chosen home of the dreaded malarious fever. How I worked and hoped and struggled, I may hereafter recount. My spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. I had to build indigo vats and start factories and cultivation. I reclaimed lands from the dense virgin forest—I dug wells, founded villages, built granaries, constructed roads and bridges, and tried my best to be a brave and useful pioneer; but the deadly climate was the victor in the end. It could not well be otherwise. I was in reality very

weak and ill. All my old servants who had followed me to this far-off nook from the Tirhoot villages sickened with the insidious fever, and had to go back to their homes. I battled with my growing weakness as long as I dared. Many a day, when I could no longer walk, I was carried over the cultivation in a *palkee*. Many a day have I lain in the jungle in the throes of fever and ague, while I directed the operations of my coolies in the ever-widening clearing; but at last I had fairly to yield, and I was sent down by my kind and liberal employer to Bombay, on full pay, to see if a course of salt-water baths would drive the gnawing rheumatic demon from the lodgment he had effected in my joints.

All was in vain. Salicene, salycilic acid, hot baths, sulphur bandages, electricity, friction, liniments, all kinds of medicaments were tried, but all were unavailing. The only thing that left me was my balance at the bank; and my brother just then arriving from England, took me over with him to Calcutta a crippled and helpless burden. In Calcutta I had the best advice, and all the alleviations that unbounded brotherly tenderness could procure, but the doctors could do nothing for me, and sea air and prolonged change of climate were prescribed as a last desperate resource, although even then it was feared I would remain a cripple for life.

When my two brothers carried me in their arms up the steamer's steep sides, and bade me adieu with faltering speech and moist eyes, little did they imagine that a few short months of the wonder-working air of sunny Australia would transform me into a hale and active man again; and alas! as little did I imagine that in little more than a year my gentle younger brother

would succumb to that dreaded Indian scourge—cholera.

Let me carry you back to the muddy, swift, and silent Hooghly. The engineers have gone below, and we are busily getting up steam. What a motley ever-changing scene the deck of the steamer presents to my view as I lazily survey it from my easy-chair! Here are Chinese, habited in blue and black calico, returning to the land of the sun, each with a heterogeneous assortment of odd-shaped cups, tea-pots, and cooking-vessels, destined to prepare the mysterious mixtures and decoctions in which the soul of the Chinaman delighteth.

Perched high on a pile of boxes are several Arab Jews and Jewesses, swathed in shawls and turbans of the gaudiest colours. One is a watchmaker from Baghdad, another a jeweller from Aden, while, to complete the group, we have a blind beggar from Damascus. With his shaven poll, his close-cropped dark beard, and his staring, sightless eyes, he looks perhaps the most picturesque of the group.

A noisy party of low-caste Germans are shrugging, shouting, and gesticulating with amazing vigour and volubility. Their flash jewellery and brazen looks proclaim them pot-house runners or crimps, very vultures in human guise. Lascars, Malays, Armenians, negroes from Mozambique, Mussulmans from the Straits, Jews, Christians, Turks, and Greeks flit about the deck like figures in a phantasmagoria. A party of Armenian Jews, with Hindu servants, are busy attending to the wants of over a thousand goats and sheep, which, cooped and confined between barricades, stagger on the slippery deck, or, with terror in their eyes, and cries and moans of fear and pain, jostle and lurch from

side to side with every movement of the steamer. Farther forward, near the cooking galleys of the Chinamen, are two or three rows of cows and bullocks which seem quite as miserable and as much abroad as the poor sheep and goats.

All of these animals are intended for the Penang and Singapore markets. The trade is entirely in the hands of a few Jews and one or two Mussulmans, who make it pay most handsomely.

Far over the length and breadth of India, from Dinapore, Patna, Bhangulpore, and in many a village of Bengal, their emissaries buy up all the goats and sheep they can collect, at prices ranging from a rupee to four or five rupees, but rarely more. They pay a freight of two and a half to three rupees a head, and get seven and eight, and not unfrequently ten and even twelve dollars for each animal landed at Penang or Singapore. Deducting losses by deaths, expenses of fodder, &c., our dealers still realize the handsome average profit of from three to four dollars, say, seven to eight rupees a head on each goat or sheep. These Jews are fine-looking fellows, perfect linguists, and clever, versatile, shrewd men of business; but one and all aboard our steamer betrayed a marked partiality for spirits. They drink a most intoxicating liquor, distilled from dates and flavoured with aniseed, and during the whole voyage were more or less drunk.

By-and-by, as the busy crowds settle down to their places, the medley of sounds dies away, and the unhappy goats, at last making up their minds to the inevitable, begin to turn their attention to the bunches of dried grass, which, twisted into the strands of a long rope, are hung all over the deck at short intervals. We are an animated farm-yard; and when the wind is

ahead, the odour from the pent-up animals is strong enough to "kill bees," as the Scotch mate remarks.

There is little of interest on either of the river's banks. We have left the shipping and the jute mills far behind, and already sniff the faint far odour of the sea. Near the light-ship, we pass two strongly-built, red-striped boats, with clumsy platforms of bamboos projecting over the sides. The bulwarks are open, but the crafts seem stiff sea-boats, able to live in a strong gale of wind, as indeed they are. I find these boats are from the Maldive islands, where they are built. They make one voyage a year to Calcutta, loaded with shells, cowries, dried fish, cocoa-nuts and coir fibre, and return with rice, ghee, dall, and other edibles. A Yorkshire captain on board, travelling, like myself, in search of health, tells me that the islanders are fanatic Mussulmans all, but very hospitable. He was once wrecked among them, and they kept him and his crew for six months, and would take nothing whatever as the price of their hospitality.

The air is now getting chill; a fine fresh breeze ahead of the beam, and a crimson bank of cloud to leeward, changing to grey and bluish-black as the sun sinks, tell us it is time to go below; so we leave the crowded deck to seek the solitude of our cabins, and dream perhaps of health renewed. The sea air began soon to work wonders on the shattered invalid. My fellow-passengers the Yorkshireman and a genial American from Philadelphia were kindness itself, and we had some pleasant musical evenings on the run down the bay. Little of incident occurred, and little worthy of narration, beyond the periodical squabblings of the freely bibulous Israelites, as they quarrelled over their cups—and on the 28th of January, about sunset, we

sighted Penang island in the hazy distance, but it was not till midnight that we dropped anchor in the harbour.

Next morning we were threading our way among crowds of Chinese, Malays, and Klings. This day was being held the great couree festival of the Madrasses, and all were dressed in their brightest holiday colours. A vast concourse were hurrying up to the waterfall that comes tumbling over a lofty wooded crag behind the town.

Getting into a gharry, we rattled through the crowd at a tremendous pace. The gharries here are all drawn by very small ponies from the province of Deh-li on the mainland, and the pluck, pace, and endurance of the little animals are surprising. Rarely exceeding twelve hands in height, they are the hardiest and most spicy-looking little "tats" I have ever seen, the *beau-ideal* of a hockey tat, and to be bought for from 80 to 100 dollars. Were the aristocratic sportsmen of Lilliebridge but to import these little equine wonders, Polo in perfection might be enjoyed in England, such as the famed Muninpoorees themselves might not equal, and such as has never certainly yet been witnessed by any Polo club in the United Kingdom.

On we went, between neatly-trimmed hedges of China bamboo, past Chinese shops with quaint signs, and dried fish of curious shape and fearful odour, flapping in the breeze. Past groups of Malays with calabash hats and gaudy silks shimmering in the sun; dusky beauties bedecked with golden ornaments on nose, hair, ears, feet, and arms; such a wealth of jewellery. What a splendid loot Penang would make! On past plantations of areca-nuts; past the baths built on the face of the hill, with the murmur of falling water

sounding pleasantly in our ears; past the fair with its noise and glitter and heat; with its merry-go-rounds, and rocking-boats in full swing, peep-shows, stands of confectionery, and a Chinese theatre, crammed to the door with a noisy and excited audience; Fakeers shouting and singing, and rattling their strings of beads on their polished cocoa-nut shells; beggars in every attitude of deformity, and in every stage of disease.

Such a sight I never saw before. Far up the tortuous road wound the streams of devotees, among the luxuriant tropical vegetation, looking like a huge crawling snake, displaying fresh folds of ever-changing colour at every moment. A clear stream came dancing among the boulders, and here, in each pool and under every rippling cascade, we beheld a noisy group of bathers, the long black hair of the women streaming in the sparkling water, like a vision of (a nut-brown) Undine and her nymphs. On every hand, huge boulders of granite reared their rugged fronts from a wilderness of flowers and tangled ferns; while far up the wooded mountain-side the flashing waterfall bounded from rock to rock, tossing its shattered spray among the sunbeams. The scenery was magnificent; the changing groups, the bewildering colours, the varied costumes, the bustle and stir, and noise and laughter. One almost felt as if he were assisting at some mad festival in the shadowy realms of dreamland. All this time, however, the heat and its attendant thirst were painfully real; but having quenched the latter in a bumper of cocoa-nut milk, we again made for the steamer, leaving the transformation scene behind us. Next day we bade good-bye to Penang, and left for Singapore.

CHAPTER II.

Singapore—My impressions of the island—Start for Australia—Among the islands—Torres Straits—Our captain—Passengers and Chinese doctor—Somerset—Looking back—Colonial evidences—A bush dandy—The pearl shell fishery—The diver's boats and details of the fishing—The pearl oyster—Incidents of the fishing—Curious facts in natural history—Sharks.

EARLY in the morning of the 1st of February, 1877, we sighted Singapore island. The approach to the harbour was beautiful in the extreme: bold, rocky islets, wooded down to the water's edge, scattered all about, and the shipping looming against the sky in the far distance. We had a strong tide rushing like a mill-race against us, and as we neared the narrow opening leading to the harbour, the vistas of crag and wooded height, with red and white bungalows peeping at us from every turn, were very striking. What a Babel as we slowly drew up to the wharf! Jews, Malays, Negroes, Chinamen, all chattering as loudly as they could—a perfect torrent of sound.

The town lies some two miles from the wharf, and we drove up between low marshy flats now covered by the tide, but which at low water are a dank, reeking mass of dense vegetation and evil-smelling mud and refuse.

The principal hotel is the Hôtel de l'Europe; but

if the management have not improved, since I trod its uneven pavements with aching feet, I would advise intending visitors to Singapore to give it a wide berth. The table was wretchedly supplied; the Chinese boys who act as servants were insolent in their demeanour, and insufficient in number to yield good attendance. The hotel is finely situated, facing the bay, with a good maidan and promenade in front; but the management was simply execrable. The charges, moreover, were excessive, and during the eight days that some of my friends remained there, the bedrooms were neither swept nor garnished. When one servant was told that he would be complained of to the proprietor, he coolly answered, "All right, you wish you make row. Master no care. I no care!" nor did the appeal unto Cæsar himself mend matters. He curtly gave us to understand that we didn't know when we were well off.

It is an invidious thing to make comparisons, and an unthankful task to find fault; but several of our fellow-passengers, more fortunate, found good food, cheerful rooms, and every consideration paid to their comfort at the Clarendon, another hotel of more modest proportions than the Hôtel de l'Europe, but its superior in comfort, courtesy and cleanliness. It is only fair to add that since my visit, I have seen friends who tell me that the situations are now reversed, and that under a new management the Hôtel de l'Europe is all that the most fastidious traveller might require.

We were not sorry when we shook the dust of Singapore from our feet, and embarked on board the "Somerset," one of the Eastern and Australian Company's steamers, for Sydney. I had a happy reunion and

hospitable reception from relations in Singapore; but the heat was excessive, and the moist atmosphere bad for a rheumatic invalid. The island, so far as climate goes, is perhaps the most equable spot in all our vast empire. During the whole circle of the year the temperature does not vary more than three degrees at any season. The nights are steamy and hot. The atmosphere is relaxing. Markets are but poorly supplied, and living is not cheap. I was not particularly enamoured of Singapore from my short acquaintance with it. But I was weak and in pain, and that may have tinged my impressions. Our route in the "Somerset" took us past the town of Rhio, founded by the Dutch as a free port to rival Singapore, but which has never attained much importance. Past Karimata island, a bold towering mountainous spot, we steamed through the Java Sea, passing Bamean island, with its mountain summit lost in a snowy mantle of fleecy cloud, and on the 11th sighted Madura, an island on the Java coast.

Next morning, we were lucky enough to get a fine view of Mount Bator, an active volcano on the island of Balli. On nearly all of these islands in this marvellous archipelago, numerous traces of very recent volcanic action are manifest, and passengers by the Torres Straits mail route may often see the hazy outline of floating clouds of smoke on the distant islands, showing where the internal fires are at work, and evidencing eruptive agencies in a state of irrepressible activity. Through the glasses, we could see the smoke and flame of Mount Bator quite distinctly, and marked the rugged scaurs down which the boiling lava rushes, when there is any great sudden upheaval of the molten seething mass in Pluto's cauldron far below. The sail through these

waters is very pleasant and beautiful. For several days we never for a moment lost sight of land, and the succession of beautiful islands, with their mountains, bays, forests, villages, and abrupt indentations, all shrouded in the soft, gauzy, greyish tint of distance, that softened the outlines, and toned down the colours, presented an ever-fresh study, an ever-shifting panorama of delightful scenery.

On Monday, the 19th, we reached the entrance to Torres Straits, where we anchored during the night, the navigation through the straits being intricate and dangerous. The survey of this part of the great highway of waters is indeed still far from being complete; there are many hidden shoals, dangerous reefs, and treacherous currents, whose existence are not marked on the charts. Since the regular establishment of a line of mail steamers, however, every successive trip adds something to the knowledge of our hydrographers, and the Queensland government, in conjunction with the Imperial authorities, are even now engaged in a comprehensive survey of the route, which will in time make the charts of these intricate waters as reliable as those of the more open and ancient pathways of commerce through the dominions of old Father Neptune.

Our captain was a short, bull-headed, irascible old salt, of the Captain Crosstree pattern. Our skipper may have been a very good sailor, but he was a most grumpy and unpleasant companion. He was a capital hand at whist, and won with ready good-humour; when his cards were bad, however, his taciturnity was very portentous, until at length, if the run of ill-luck continued, he would dash down his hand, splutter out a few oaths, and hurry off to the bridge to see "how her

head" was. A steady adherence to these tactics brought the worthy captain out considerably to the good, when points were reckoned up.

The "Somerset" was a capital sea boat, but too small for passenger requirements in tropical latitudes. The cabins were close, hot, and infested with cockroaches, red ants, and rats. The supply of ice too might have been on a more liberal scale, and the cookery would have borne some improvement, without risk of running into the charge of prodigality. The European steerage passengers had to sleep on deck, and herd with the Chinese, who swarmed about the forepart of the vessel. There was one jolly fat little fellow, of a superior grade amongst them. He was a Chinese doctor, and his fellows treated him with great deference, but his method of diagnosis would rather have puzzled the inductive philosophers. His theory of disease was this:—All disease was simply "matter in the wrong place." The particular matter out of which any specific disease originated was a clot of blood. How to discover and remove these supererogatory clots, was the business of his life. He professed to be gifted with a sort of clairvoyant power. Our pig-tailed Galen could read his fellow-man like a book. He could see right through you with those glittering, beady, rat-like eyes of his. His mode of operations with a patient was somewhat after this fashion:—He looked at you from head to foot, made you put out your tongue, slapped your chest, cracked your joints, and felt you all over in regular orthodox fashion. Then he professed to draw a diagram of your internal economy, and if you were very bad, or if he wished to impress you with that idea, he sprinkled a liberal supply of dark marks over the diagram, each of which represented a

clot of blood, and the occult seat of some mysterious *malaise*. Being sufficiently impressed with the gravity of your symptoms as represented by the number of clots, he next prescribed some abominable mixture, and after you had swallowed this in sufficient quantity, he would give you another diagram showing the fatal spots all cleared off, and your convalescence was accomplished. The amount of indescribable stuff that you had to swallow would vary with the limits of your purse, the extent of your credulity, and the measure of your patience. Would it be believed that in Sydney, some time after my arrival in Australia, I found a Chinese doctor pursuing exactly these tactics, and finding numbers of dupes who believed all his professions, and paid their money for exactly such treatment as I have above described?

The E. and A. company have been very unfortunate in losing two of their finest vessels, the "Singapore" and the "Queensland," yet they have carried out their contracts honourably and with credit, and they deserve well at the hands of the Australian colonies. Our bull-necked little captain, however, seemed to fancy that his passengers were in some occult way responsible for these disasters; and that the loss might in some measure be made up by cutting off our ice supply, denying us the luxury of the punkah, and docking us as often as he could of an occasional slice of ham, or supplementary pot of preserves. Where passenger traffic is counted, it is, in sober earnest, a very short-sighted policy to be parsimoniously inclined in the matter of table allowance. A genial, pleasant captain, with good cookery and a clean, well-supplied table, will often cover a multitude of sins, even including the greatest *bête noir* of all, slow steaming.

On the 20th we anchored off Somerset, the most northerly township in Australia. Here once again did I gaze on the mightiest island of our world, the last grand continent being inundated by the resistless Anglo-Saxon flood, that seems destined to pour its vivifying and fertilizing wave over every portion of this great globe of ours.

I remembered me of my former farewell to Australia, twelve long years ago. *Ay de mi!* what changes during that period! I remembered the wild, gusty, squally murk and obscurity in which we had taken our farewell of Cape Leuwin; and a flood of recollections poured over my mind as I realized all the stirring changes and incidents of my chequered career since then.

My thoughts were enough sad. Then, I had been in the full flush of youthful hope and vigour. The world was all before me, with not a care to dim the horizon. Light in heart as in pocket, and the bounding pulse and vigorous step gave token of a stalwart frame as yet untouched by sickness and suffering. And here I was back in Australia, once more a wanderer on the face of the earth, shattered in health, not overburdened with worldly wealth, away from all my friends and acquaintances, the past gone beyond recall, and the future all dark and unknown before me. What wonder if I felt a little melancholy, and inclined to take rather a sombre view of my surroundings. However, the courage and renewed hope of returning health were already at work, assisting to raise my spirits, and though my limbs and joints still refused to bear me as buoyantly and briskly as of yore, I dismissed my gloomy forebodings, and prepared to accept what fate might throw in my way, if not with lively

gratitude and eager anticipation, yet with calm fortitude and philosophical resignation.

Somerset, at the time of my visit, was not a place calculated to strike a stranger with any exaggerated ideas of greatness and grandeur. Somehow it seemed the very embodiment of those vague, half-formed ideas which one is apt to associate with the word colonial. The houses were of the hut order of architecture. The alignments of the streets were not easily distinguishable from what is euphoniously termed "scrub and stumps." Horticulture seemed to be carried on after a somewhat primitive fashion. Pumpkins were the staple article of vegetable produce, and seemed to grow anywhere; and pigs and poultry rather outnumbered the biped inhabitants. The first purely colonial evidence that struck me was the Billycock hat and the slop clothing. Could any one who has travelled in other countries ever mistake the distinctive features of colonial dress? It is something unique, and unapproachable in its tawdry shabbiness and unrelieved ugliness. A colonial hat seldom seems natty or new, glossy or neat. There are few lines of grace about the garments, and they somehow seem ill-fitting, shrunken, sordid, and mean. The country as yet is so thinly inhabited in these remote parts, that for the dwellers in the bush ready-made clothing or none is the only choice.

A bush dandy is a wonderful sight, resplendent in all the colours of the rainbow; frilled shirt front, much embroidered; velvet tie of cerulean blue, picked out with red and yellow like a stick of candy at a village fair; trousers tight at the hips, swelling at the thighs, narrowing again at the knee, and widening out over the calf and ancle into a bell-mouthed, blunderbuss

shape; the material being a well-defined cross check highly *prononcé* both in pattern and hue. The waistcoat is generally worn very open, to display the ornamented shirt bosom, which, however, betrays an ignorance of the laundress's art, and is, at times, suggestive of tobacco juice and a damp chest. The vest, moreover, is only considered *en règle* if it be composed of some velvet, satin, or silk texture, with a warp of cotton thread running conspicuously through it into a gaudy sprigged flower-pattern. The coat is short in the sleeves, square cut as to tails; the waist and buttons corresponding thereto are perched high up in the small of the back, and cuffs, collar, lappets, and edges are everywhere liberally bound and bordered with braid, while the eternal Billycock, much dinted, battered, and besmeared round the circumference with grease and perspiration, crowns the edifice, and completes the costume. If a real high-class dandy of the first water, be sure a pair of patent leather dancing-boots, a brass ring, a riding-whip, a silver watch, and several golden charms, a nugget pin, and a cricket-belt of wool and bead-work will not be wanting as accessories.

The crew had now commenced to take in cargo, and we had time to look about. The township of Somerset is beautifully situated on the shores of a narrow strait between Albany island and the main land. The township itself barely deserves the name, being but a scattered collection of detached huts, and the permanent population, I fancy, could not have topped a total of thirty at the outside. Any little importance it possesses it derives from its being the depôt for the Torres Straits pearl shell fishery; but it had even then been decided to abolish Somerset as a station, and form another on some of the islands further west, where the tides would

not be so strong, and the situation would be more sheltered.

Already, at the time of my visit, Somerset was showing all the signs of incipient decay. The gardens were relapsing into jungle, and most of the houses had been half destroyed by the ravages of the destructive white ant, which here teems in innumerable millions. At some distance from the shore these ant-hills, which stud the slopes in every direction, looked exactly like the white monumental stones and mute memorial mounds in some vast cemetery; and rising as they do in countless cones and pinnacles on every slope and undulating brae, they give an aspect of extraordinary funereal ghostliness to the place.

At that time there were about sixty large sea-boats, cutters, schooners, yawls, and what not, employed in the staple industry of the straits—the pearl shell fishing. The shelling stations are scattered through the Torres Straits' groups of islets, and give employment to nearly eight hundred men. What a jumble of nationalities have we here! Runaway sailors and deserters from the marine of every civilized state; South Sea Islanders, Papuans, Lascars, Malays, Chinamen, Coreans, and even negroes from the West Indies. Tragedies are not uncommon, and it needs a man of dauntless courage and iron nerve to stow himself away out of the world for a time as "boss" of a shelling station. Of such material were made the bold buccaneers of bygone story. It is, however, fast becoming a settled industry, and law and order reign among the mixed *mélange* of nationalities.

Dredging has now been in many cases introduced; but formerly nearly all the shell was procured by naked Malay and Polynesian divers in shallow patches

of from two to three fathoms depth of water. These shallows have now become nearly exhausted. All the accessible shoal water banks have been stripped bare of every saleable shell, and the diving is now done by professional divers, aided by the latest and best diving apparatus, and in from ten to thirteen fathoms of water. Large capital is invested in the trade, which is in the hands chiefly of a few Sydney merchants.

The pearl oyster is a very large mollusc, the shell weighing as much sometimes as eight pounds. The shells are found both singly and in patches on a muddy bottom, and in places where the tides do not run very strong. The diver generally walks along the bottom, often for miles at a time, until he strikes a patch. The boat overhead is pulled slowly along, so as to keep pace with the submerged pioneer far below. What a weird, fanciful sort of an existence this must be! What a hero for a novelist like Victor Hugo, for instance! How the imagination fires up as one fancies all the strange aquatic monsters and submarine marvels that disclose themselves through the glazed bars of the diver's helmet.

The Kanaleas or South Sea Islanders make the best divers, and large numbers of them are employed in the fishery. The men of the Torres Straits islands are a big-limbed, swarthy, strong set of savage-looking fellows. They bear long curved lines of tattoo marks upon their arms, and from the shoulders down to their hips. The upper cartilage of the nose is slit in a V-shaped fashion :—what for, I was not able to discover ; in English eyes it certainly does not add to their beauty.

The divers are paid fair wages, and get a small share of profits. Any pearls that may be found, they

are allowed to appropriate to themselves as perquisites, the owners not considering it worth their while to go in for anything but the shell itself. We saw a few very fine pearls that an Austrian Jew, a dealer in precious stones—had bought—one in particular was a big pear-shaped pearl of great lustre and beauty. I believe he only paid fifteen shillings for it. It was worth as many pounds, he said. In general, however, the pearls found here are irregular in outline, and lack lustre.

According to quality, the shell, cleaned, and all the outside callosities and roughnesses chipped off, fetches from 80*l.* to 140*l.* per ton in the London market. It is risky, and the returns are precarious. Rations are very expensive, and a spell of bad weather will often put the balance on the wrong side of the ledger. Competition, too, is brisk, and unless more discrimination be used, and a less wasteful mode of fishing be adopted, the time is not far distant, when the Torres Straits Pearl Fishery will be numbered among the industries of the past.

It seems to me that as in the Trincomalee fishery, there should be licences granted, a close season of two years at a time, inaugurated; and some method introduced. Unless some such steps be taken, the supply bids fair to be very soon exhausted, and a promising and lucrative industry imped out of existence. All this might be obviated by a little wise prevision and rational adherence to natural requirements. One cannot in this world both "eat their cake and have it," and it is a bad policy at all times, "to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs."

After writing the above, I gathered fuller details of the actual manner of working at the shelling stations

from an experienced old shell-fisher in Sydney, and as the subject is of interest, I give here the substance of his information.

The boats employed in the fishery have a capacity of about seven or eight tons register. They are built in Sydney (where indeed some capital boat-building work can be turned out) and they are invariably, or nearly so, lugger-rigged. They are sent down to the Straits by the Eastern and Australian mail steamers, and are well fitted, and admirably adapted for the rather rough work in which they have to be used.

The various firms who are engaged in the shell trade show a keen rivalry with each other, and are constantly on the outlook to secure favourable stations, and prolific patches of shell. The station is formed on the mainland, or on some of the numerous islands that stud the coast. It is a lonely life and a hazardous: when the station has been formed, the boats are sent out on their mission of collecting the precious shell, rifling the treasure-caves of the mysterious main. The usual position of affairs is here reversed, and instead of hoary old Neptune appropriating the spoils and treasure-trove of the unwary mariner, his own secret cells and inmost hidden recesses are pryed into, and ruthlessly despoiled by the universal robber—man.

Seven men are told off to each boat, and constitute the orthodox crew. All are under the orders of the captain, who is also the diver, and generally the owner of the diving dress, gear, and apparatus connected with it. The full equipment of a boat such as we have described, when properly and fully found in every necessary, is about 500*l*. Several firms employ six, seven and eight boats. It will thus be seen that considerable capital is embarked in the trade.

One of the crew has to attend entirely to the wants and requirements of the diver or captain. He is called the signal-man or tender; he receives the signals from the diver, when anything is wanted from below, and indeed much of the safety of the adventurous diver, and consequent success of the expedition, depends on the presence of mind, nerve, and fertility in resource, of the signal-man. The diver is supplied with air from the boat, pumped down to him by means of an air-pump, which is worked by two of the men, who are specially attached to this service. As the signal comes up,—"Pump faster; I want more air,"—"Too much air,"—"Haul up," or "Slack down," or whatever the signal may be,—the signal-man gives the corresponding orders to the other members of the crew, and very strict discipline prevails while fishing is going on. The duty of the fifth man is to attend to an endless rope, running over a revolving drum, and to the rope two bags are attached; the one going down empty, as the other ascends to the surface full of shell. The sixth member of the crew looks after the buoy or anchor, as the case may be, devoting his attention to the working of these exclusively, and the seventh, and sole remaining member of the party, acts as spare man to relieve the men at the pumps if the work is heavy, and he also acts as cook and sutler for the rest. Each boat carries a fortnight's provisions, and the waning stock is replenished every fortnight from the station, by a tender used for that purpose. It also takes the shell which has been collected back to the station. These provision tenders are large, roomy, well-built, fast-sailing, admirable sea-boats. They are most suitably adapted for the trade, and are capital craft in a heavy sea.

As the shell comes up, it is tumbled into the bottom of the boat, and the men afterwards open the shell with a large knife made for the purpose. The fish part is scooped bodily out into a tub, and forms the perquisite of the diver. The beard of the oyster forms a thick fringe round the edges of the shell, and this is chopped off by the fishermen. The diver searches carefully through the pulpy contents of his tub for stray pearls. The fish are all carefully and thoroughly washed up; the meat and water are strained off with the utmost care. All the contents of the tub undergo a searching scrutiny, and if any pearls are found, they are appropriated by the diver. The proprietor of the fishing station never sees them. They are the exclusive pickings of the diver himself.

The shells in this rough state are then taken aboard the tender and carried to the station. Here they are landed and when dry are divided. The internal part of the shell, the valuable inner portion, is soft when the oyster is newly caught, and if the two shells were to be divided then, the result would be, as my informant put it, much the same as if you were to pull two fresh loaves or hot rolls asunder. The chances are that one shell would rob the other; part of one would adhere to the other, and the beautiful pearly surface would be spoilt. The shells are, therefore, not divided till they have dried and "set hard." The next step is to scrape off all the rough outside excrescences, and the single shells are then scrubbed clean in salt water, with rough brushes or cocoa-nut husks. They are then stacked away in the drying house. The drying process has to be done under shelter, the sun's heat being too direct and tropical. The rays of the sun would utterly spoil the shell if it were exposed in the

open air. The heat cracks and blisters the shell, and renders it quite unsaleable.

A very curious fact in natural history is testified to by all the fishermen. It would seem that travellers in Russia are not the only creatures who are troubled with parasites. Every individual shell, the men assure me, have a tender in the shape of an attendant crustacean. As the pilot fish attends the shark, or the jackall the lion; so does the pearl oyster suffer the penalty of greatness, and has an incubus, an old man of the sea, to bear, in the shape of a small active crab. Every oyster that is opened contains one of these combative little intruders. The oyster feeds with open mouth, in the direction of the current. Seizing his opportunity, the crab pops in at the open door, and like a bailiff in possession, refuses thenceforth to be ejected. The most experienced fishermen think that this unwelcome intruder by keeping up a constant irritation, eventually kills the luckless oyster; but the fact is curious and interesting, that without an exception every live shell got in these fisheries, contains this parasitic crab.

Another no less destructive and unwelcome foe attacks the poor oyster from the outside. He is hard pressed by foes, both without and within, and when man brings his skill and ingenuity also to bear on his capture and destruction, little wonder indeed, that the pearl shell oyster is fast disappearing from its ancient haunts. The outside foe is a small thread-like worm, which fastens itself to the outside of the shell. It is a borer, and begins operations by perforating the shell, and once ensconced in the substance thereof, it seems there to find congenial sustenance, and rapidly enlarges its sheath and its dimensions, very much after the manner of

the leech. It burrows, and perforates the shell in all directions. I have seen the bed made by this destructive worm, fully as big as the thickness of my middle finger. The worm is black in colour, all the shells are pierced with minute little holes in the outside circumference. In some cases the worm penetrates right through all the layers of the shell, reaches the soft inside and kills the fish. It bores and works much as the cobra does in the timber of a ship's bottom, and may be of the same species of marine insect.

The tides in these narrow seas run at a rate of over five miles an hour, so that the actual fishing time is confined to about an hour, or an hour and a half, at full tide and slack water. Occasionally the diver will come upon a patch of dead shell, whirled into a depression of the sea floor, by some submarine eddy or swirl, among the reefs. The floor of the sea there is irregular in outline. The oysters are commonly found on a hard bottom, composed of coral and sand. The débris of this is of a clayey tenacious consistency, sticky and glutinous, of a bluish colour. On this a species of *alga* grows very thickly, attaining a uniform length of about eighteen inches. On this sea-grass, the best shells are found. To find them in this ground, the diver has to walk in a stooping posture, feeling for them with his hands, as he cannot see through the submarine jungle, as it were. Immediately on being touched, the pearl fish close their gaping portals. The hand of the diver is not unfrequently caught thus, as in a spring trap, and with such pressure as often to draw blood. In such a case he has no resource but to draw his knife and free his imprisoned digits, by severing the strong contractile muscle of the powerful bivalve. Often the diver lifts the anchor, carries it

along with him, the boat slowly following his track. When he finds shell, or is groping for it, he puts down the anchor, and commences quartering his ground, as far as the length of his air tubing will allow him, just like a pointer quartering for game. The hands are the only parts of the body exposed. These suffer from the attacks of a very frequently encountered enemy, a thin sinuous worm-like sea-snake, of from six to twelve feet in length. These sea-serpents are not venomous, but they haunt the *algæ* in great numbers, and the diver will have half a dozen sometimes biting at his hand at once, and will actually be compelled to retire discomfited from the attacks of these guerilla skirmishers underneath the wave. More commonly he rids himself of their unwelcome and persistent attentions, by taking out his ready knife and bisecting his assailants.

According to the divers, the pearl fish is a constant traveller. He wanders about in search of nutriment. They are never found stuck in the mud, or firmly attached to the bottom. Open-mouthed, they seem to commit themselves to the strong currents, and are drifted about at the mercy of the waves. The features of a patch will thus change in the course of a single tide, and in his submarine travel, the diver continually comes across single specimens of the fish he is in search of, taking a solitary ramble by themselves, roaming in quest of adventure, we can easily imagine, like any knight errant or Paladin of old.

The most dreaded enemy the diver has to encounter is the shark. Instances of his savage ferocity, his boldness, his fierce hunger for blood, might be given, enough to fill my book. As an actual fact deaths from sharks' attacks are infrequent. Billy Summers had a wonderful story to tell me, of one of his Kanalea boys,

who jumped overboard and caught a shark by the tail, and held on to it long enough to enable his comrades to spear the monster. Billy thought I believed him. I told him I would be sure to mention the *fact* in my book, and I now keep my promise.

The sharks seldom attack the divers, if these keep moving about. Sometimes the adventurous groper among the submarine vegetation, feels a shudder of apprehension, as the huge bulk of a sixteen or eighteen footer glides slowly past him, almost brushing his bathing dress. They are uncanny monsters! Lives are not often sacrificed, as I have said, but many a diver has lost hand or arm, by these fierce scourges of the sea. Going along the edge of a reef, my informant told me he has often seen numbers of large crawfish peering at him from crevices among the coral. Once or twice he has stuck them with his knife, and in the act of conveying them to his bag some huge shark has swooped down with the speed of light, and snatched away the captured crawfish. Altogether the shark is an ugly customer; and the divers whenever possible are fain to give him a wide berth, their lives depending on the caprice of, perhaps without exception, the most ruthless and savage monster in the wide range of created beings.

CHAPTER III.

The missionary—New Guinea—Early discoveries—Recent expeditions—General description of the island—Animals—Natives—Curious customs—Deadly climate—Legends—General remarks.

At Somerset we received a considerable accession to our party. Our captain grew more bearish than ever, as the cards at whist seemed ever to go against him. My health and strength were slowly returning, and I entered into all the fun and jollity with a keen zest.

Among the others who had now joined the steamer was also one who was of a higher and nobler type of character than the mere trader. This was the Rev. Mr. Lawes, a clergyman sent out to Papua by the London Missionary Society, and then in charge of the mission in New Guinea. I found him a most congenial and delightful companion. A tall, dark, comely man, with a soft, gentle eye and pleasant speech; he had the grave, gentle, winning manner of one who had long ago sunk self in his mission, and although I found him full of learning, and a rare knowledge of men and places that I burned to hear about, his singular modesty kept him often silent, when I would have liked to hear him dilate on his experiences and reminiscences. He would talk about anything rather than himself, but I had many an interesting chat with him about that wonderful and almost unknown land, New Guinea.

Perhaps there is no place on earth, not even the fever-haunted shores of Maracaybo, the swamps of Honduras, the dismal lagoons and reeking marshes of the Gold Coast, or the deadly jungles of the Indian terai, that bears such an evil reputation as this huge island does, for general unhealthiness. Next to Australia itself it is the largest island in the world, being 360 miles wide in its broadest part, and about 1300 miles in length. Up to the beginning of the present century it was quite a *terra incognita*.

Shortly after my arrival in Australia the rumour of gold in New Guinea got about, and several expeditions have been fitted out for the purpose of prospecting for gold in the interior. Goldie's expedition, consisting of some thirty men with horses and various supplies, started in 1878. They penetrated some distance into the interior, finding traces of gold but not in paying quantities, and after braving the deadly climate during the rainy season, the survivors came back disappointed and disheartened. Another expedition of gold-seekers started in the end of the same year from New Zealand, but their attempt to explore the unknown recesses of this land of mystery also ended in failure. An attempt was made to stir up public feeling in Victoria to annex the island to that colony, but beyond a deal of declamation nothing was done. Fired by the discoveries of Signor d'Alberti, the Italians seemed to have formed the idea of colonizing the island, and it was rumoured that Menotti Garibaldi and 5000 Italians were about to transfer themselves to its fever-stricken shores, and there found a new Italian colony. That also fell through: but while writing, it is again rumoured that an Italian expedition on a smaller scale is being fitted out. Meantime the

missionaries Messrs. Lawes, Chalmers, MacFarland, and others, succeeded in establishing numerous mission stations in the villages along the coast. In the early months of 1879 troubles broke out. Several runaway desperadoes from the fishing-stations, possessed of arms, took possession of a small island on the southern coast, and began aggressions on the natives. This led to retaliation. Several crews of trading and fishing vessels have been murdered. Native teachers have in some cases been poisoned, and collisions between the natives and exploring foreigners have become frequent. Mr. Chester made a tour unmolested through part of the island, and embodied his discoveries and observations in an interesting report to the Queensland Government, but now while I am writing, the natives seem to have become bitterly hostile to all white visitors, and several brutal murders and cannibal atrocities have lately been reported. Public opinion in Australia is awakening to the fact, that stern reprisals are become necessary, if this mighty unknown land is ever to become unlocked to the advance of commerce, civilization, and Christianity. It is still believed payable gold and rich minerals abound, and several expeditions are even now projected, as soon as prospects of successful exploration appear more favourable than they certainly are at present.

Mr. Lawes' chief experiences had been confined to the Western coast, and I took copious notes of the conversations I had with him. The natives round the coast, and to the east, are evidently, he thinks, of Malay origin; and probably in some remote age overran the country and forced the aborigines into the interior. They are split up into innumerable tribes, all speaking different dialects, and at war with each

other. The tribal quarrels and dissensions are frequent and fierce. To the west, and in the interior, we have what Mr. Lawes calls the original Papuans, with frizzled wooly hair like the Polynesians, and being darker, sturdier, and more ferocious than the Malayan stock.

The coast-tribes live in long narrow houses, which are built on light wooden piles on the beach; and extend in some cases a little distance out into the water—a precaution evidently prompted by the fear of a hostile incursion by the tribes of the interior. Some of their customs are very curious. Those relating to the disposal of the dead are especially so. When any man of consequence dies amongst them, the body is neither buried nor burned, but is laid out on the bare ground, and a frail canopy of grass and bamboos is erected over it. Beside this extemporised shelter for the dead, the nearest relation of the deceased watches day and night. When the dead body has reached an advanced stage of decomposition, it is taken to the sea and washed, and the skull, with the bones of the knees, arms, hips, and other large joints, are then daubed over with red clay and buried. In the interior, the custom varies somewhat. The body is first exposed on a platform, something after the Parsee fashion, till the bones and frame are entirely denuded of flesh. The bones are then collected, dried, and hung up as relics, in the habitation of the survivors.

The Papuans have no idea of a beneficent deity, but they are firm believers in evil spirits and ghosts, and might almost be described as the congeners of our modern absurd race or sect of Spiritualists. When a man dies, they believe his spirit goes out to sea. They seem to have a vague, dim, hazy idea of a future state, but they have no priesthood. They have exorcists or

devil-drivers, who act somewhat after the fashion of the Indian medicine man. When an evil spirit enters into or possesses a dweller on the coast, and it becomes necessary to propitiate the unwelcome intruder, a man from one of the interior tribes is invariably summoned. In return for various presents which are bestowed upon him, he goes through a variety of antics, and eventually pretends to drive the evil spirit into a hole in the earth, made for the purpose, by a pointed stick.

Polygamy is not common; the chiefs have sometimes more than one wife, but as a rule the marriage tie is very much respected. The great drawback to settlement in Papua is the climate. Along the flat densely-wooded, swampy coast this is deadly. Fever is at all times prevalent, the natives suffer a little from it themselves, while strangers invariably are attacked. The use of tobacco is known among these strange people, and, according to Mr. Lawes, they are inveterate smokers. They have quite a unique custom in this respect. Instead of drinking healths, as with us, the Papuans smoke healths. The long bamboo pipe is filled, and the toast-master calling out the name of the party whom it is intended to honour, takes a whiff, when the pipe is passed on to the next, who in turn repeats the toast and takes his whiff, and so on, till the pipe has passed round.

Tobacco is cultivated in the interior, but came originally from the west. They have a strange legend about its introduction. A man had a wife called Ava or Eva (strange coincidence in the name, to that of our commonly-accepted first mother), and was expecting a son and heir, but was warned in a dream that she, Eva, would conceive and bring forth certain seeds, which he was to sow, and the leaves thereof were to be col-

lected and dried, and the smoke from them would be a panacea for all earthly cares. It all turned out as he had dreamt; the seeds were sown; the plant grew, and was called their son. By-and-by the secret of the dream leaked out; other seeds were got from the original plant, and the use of the weed became universal. These tribes also chew *pân*, employing the same ingredients, and using it exactly as do the Hindus.

Their food is principally bananas and yams. Along the east coast the gardens are neatly fenced in, and at Hood Bay the natives work hard at canoe-building. They are yet in the Stone age, using adzes made of hard greenish stone, with broad sharp edges beautifully curved, and with these they hew out fine roomy canoes, and do all their wood-work. On this coast, too, they all wear the nose-stick, which is a cylinder of ebony or other hard wood, tipped with pearl shell, worn athwart the face through the cartilage between the nostrils, and may be called the distinctive national badge or symbol. That most commonly in vogue, however, is made of part of the clam shell, beautifully polished, with the tips neatly tied and ornamented with plaits of human hair. They have also ornaments of boars' tusks, which they wear in their mouths when going to battle, thinking it makes them brave and enduring. Captain Lawson's book, although many of the papers and magazines at home were hoaxed by it, was entirely a romance, a pure fabrication founded on the baseless experiences of a lively imagination. Captain Moresby has published his experiences; his book is interesting, although it is chiefly a record of nautical discovery. The natives are not naturally inimical to white men, Mr. Lawes thinks, and can be easily won by kindness and a confident, firm demeanour.

They used formerly to eat their food raw; indeed, they have a curious legend as to the origin of fire. One day they saw at a vast distance out at sea something smoking, and despatched a snake to bring some of the strange substance to land. The snake went, but came back empty-handed; then they sent the kangaroo, and he also returned unsuccessful. Their next envoy was a dog, and he, more fortunate, brought some fire in his mouth. And fire they have used ever since. Eventually a quarrel arose between the dog and kangaroo, the latter claiming a share of the spoil, and for that reason, they say, the dog attacks the kangaroo whenever he sees him. In the face of such evidence, who could doubt.

The fauna is quite like the Australian, chiefly marsupial mammals, and the birds are of gorgeous plumage. Alligators are very numerous both in salt and fresh water. All tropical products would grow readily, and on the ranges there is splendid grazing-ground; but the climate, as I have said, is deadly, and will probably for long keep this fine island from the colonizing influences of the Anglo-Saxon race.

The very latest reports from the islands disclose an increasing feeling of bitterness against all and sundry foreigners and intruders. Piratical haunts have sprung up in some of the island fastnesses on the coast, and the recent visit of a British man-of-war has provoked much hostile criticism, the captain, it is alleged, having displayed undue leniency and want of firmness; and his visit has only incited the lawless renegades he was sent to punish to fresh atrocities and bolder deeds of violence. It is not improbable that the state of affairs on the coast will very shortly be forced disagreeably on the attention of the Imperial Government.

CHAPTER IV.

We leave Somerset—The Australian coast—The "Black fellows"—A wreck—Brisbane—Aspect from the river—Signs of progress—Hotels—Loungers at the bars—The streets—Houses of Parliament—View of the city—Queensland a fine "poor man's" country.

After leaving Somerset we encountered heavy squalls and almost incessant rain. The decks were sloppy and miserable; a blinding sheet of hissing rain hid the blurred outlines of the coast from view, and we had to anchor each night, it was so thick. We discharged our Chinese passengers at Cook-town on the 23rd, and were glad to be relieved of their unsavoury presence. A poor digger, who had come all the way from Singapore, died here within a day's sail of his home, and was consigned to his deep-sea grave that morning. Next day the weather was worse than ever, and seemed to affect the spirits of every one on board. Our captain shone out to-day. He growled at everything and everybody, and his very hair seemed stiff.

After passing Bowen, a small seaport some 700 miles from Somerset, we enjoyed a beautiful warm Sunday, passing some of the finest coast scenery we had yet beheld. The coast is bold and rocky; great mountains, literally clothed with dark green foliage, rise there from the water's edge; huge boulders and rocky cliffs peer out from their nests of pine and

bushy scrub; numerous cascades and torrents leap down from cliff to cliff; islands lie scattered on all sides. A long glistening line of beach, with dark masses of trees behind, and the water rippling among the sand and shells—indeed a vision of beauty. We could make out several natives among the rocks and bush on the shore, and one or two came out in their light bark canoes, and cried out for tobacco and biscuits, some of which we threw to them. They are a repulsive-looking race, perfectly naked, with great ridges of flesh all over their shoulders and ribs. It seemed as if they had gashed themselves, and then, inserting pebbles or other solid substances in the wound, allowed the flesh to grow over and enclose the foreign body, whatever it may have been. I discovered afterwards that these ugly fleshy protuberances are the honourable scars gained in the frequent exercise of the *duello*. When two of them quarrel, they challenge each other to mortal combat. Grasping each the other, as wrestlers do, they begin by cutting each other with knives, shells, or sharp flints, down the shoulders, ribs, and thighs. Gash for gash is stolidly given and received, and, whoever can cut the deepest, and stand the horrid carving process the longest, is adjudged the victor. These people have no notion of even the rudest agricultural operation, and live entirely on fish, berries, roots, insects, and wild animals. All along this coast the aborigines are pretty numerous. They are a treacherous and cunning race, never moving out at night, and never sleeping two nights in the same place. Their *gunyah* or hut is simply a few branches of brushwood thrown together and tied at the top.

On the night of the 25th we stopped near the wreck of the ill-fated "Singapore," and took off the captain, a

fine-looking fellow, who had been on the island, staying by the wreck, since the disaster, which had but a few weeks previously occurred. We could see distinctly, in the clear moonlight, the masts, spars, and part of the hull of the luckless vessel, as well as the black rock on which she struck. All the crew were saved; the cargo, a valuable shipment of tea, and the vessel herself, were a total loss, their combined worth being about 100,000*l*. The ship was only about a mile from the shore where she struck, and was another sad evidence of the crying necessity for a thorough survey of these waters. We gazed through the night-glasses, and saw our boat pull round the ill-fated wreck. We could not help sympathizing with the poor captain, who only had saved the clothes he stood in, and seemed quite unmanned when he took farewell of the poor wreck of his gallant vessel, that had borne him so proudly in many a rude conflict with storm and surge.

By the time we entered Moreton Bay, and steamed slowly through its muddy waters in the little tug-boat, I was beginning to feel stronger and better than I had ever thought possible. My American friend and I bade a kindly adieu to the officers, but were not sorry to part with our crusty captain. Brisbane, the growing capital of Queensland, was now our goal.

The bay and river do not look either imposing or picturesque when they first burst on the view. There is a wide semicircular bay, studded with black posts, red beacons, and other channel marks; and the distant low-lying shores are guarded by outlying mud-flats, and fringed with a thick belt of fever-suggesting mangroves. You can make no mistake about the fact that there are mosquitoes. These blood-thirsty insects were a terrible plague.

It was now the month of March, when the most pleasant season of the year perhaps for Queensland begins, the day's heat being tempered by a bracing wind, and the nights still, balmy, and cool. After we leave the open bay, and enter the Brisbane river, there are all the evidences of an approach to some important centre of commerce. The river winds in and out among richly-wooded slopes, or broad reaches of mangrove-covered swamps. Various small craft spread their tiny sails, and skim lighty over the stream, which, however, nowhere attains any great breadth. River steamers pass and re-pass, with their funnels vomiting huge volumes of smoke; some with the old-fashioned paddle-boxes very high out of the water, others with a huge revolving wheel right astern. Big ships of over 1000 tons burthen lie anchored in mid-stream. A steam-dredger is busy deepening the channel in parts; row-boats flit to and fro; wharves and private landing-stages project into the water from almost every point. Here the tin smelting-works, and there the steam rope-walk, resounding with the clang of machinery, and the busy hum of labour, show us that new enterprises are being rapidly organized; while on the wooded heights there is a strange jumble of half-cleared land, virgin forest, trim gardens gay with flowers, and neat villas and cottages with light verandahs. Here a handsome stone church, and there a *paddock* of scrubby grass and charred tree-stumps. A strange mixture of rocky cliff and trim terraces—the ruggedness of nature and the ordered works of human industry.

This half-completed aspect of the place at once strikes the stranger fresh to the colonies. In the streets, some wooden shanty, with a few old weather-boards

roughly nailed together for a "lean-to," roofed with rusty iron, old packing-tin, and tattered tarpaulin, lifts its unkempt head beside the stately erection of hewn stone and painted brick, ornate with sculptured cornices innumerable, vaulted halls, and floors of slate or marble. Brisbane is beautifully situated, and at every turn the work of creation is going on. Buildings of brick and stone are rapidly taking the place of wooden ones. New wharves are being built; the roads, which as yet are very rough and uneven, are being levelled and metalled. Queen-street, the principal artery of the town, is a wide busy thoroughfare, well-watered, paved, and lighted, with handsome shops and offices, and imposing town-hall, and a roomy post-office.

There is one theatre, not of the most gorgeous type, and the hotels are numerous, the best perhaps being the Metropolitan, the Australian, the Queen's, the Royal, and the Imperial; but there are many others good, clean, and comfortable. In these the attendance is all that could be desired; the cookery and food plain, but excellent; and the charges very moderate. One can live at an hotel very comfortably indeed for Rs. 25 to 30 per week, and board in private lodging-houses can be had even cheaper; but the rooms are, as a rule, little better than bonnet-boxes, so far as size is concerned. It is pretty much the same all over Australia. You may get cleanliness, good food, decent drink, and even pleasant company at an hotel, but you cannot get roominess. The cab charges are rather heavy — four shillings an hour, and cabman-nature much the same here as in other places; that is, they will take more if they can get it. Straw hats with puggrees are worn by most of the pedestrians, and nearly all the working men eschew coats alto-

gether, and display the quality of their linen to the world.

At every street corner nearly there is a bar, and lounging round it invariably three or four bronzed hardy ruffians in cabbage-tree hats and shirt-sleeves. I use the word ruffian in a strictly Pickwickian sense. Such a ruffian is in every instance a free and independent elector; candidates for legislative honours bow to him; editors belaud him; political wire-pullers flatter him, and generally he thinks no small-beer of himself. The short "cutty," and black leather belt, with a small pouch like an ammunition pouch, thick serviceable boots, and corduroy or moleskin trousers, complete the costume.

What these men are I cannot discover. Whether up-country draymen, bushmen, diggers, stockmen, or men out of work, I know not; but from earliest morn till far into the night, every bar is the resort of some half-dozen of their kind, and the routine of the day goes on without apparent change. The routine consists in whittling a stick of tobacco of amazing blackness and hardness, with an aroma as pungent as of 500 Trichinopolies rolled into one. The chips are then worked in the horny palm, pressed into the bowl of a short black clay, and ignited. Much expectoration follows the smoking thereof, and also a consuming thirst. A few expletives are uttered, and then a general adjournment to the bar; and so on from hour to hour, and from day to day.

Another thing that strikes the stranger from Calcutta or the East, is the total absence of bullock hackeries and other outlandish vehicles. Here are the old home carts, drawn by powerful draught-horses; milk carts, butchers' carts, and merchants' drays, some

with two horses harnessed abreast. The private buggies and American waggonettes are all substantial looking, and evidently intended more for real use than for ornament. Mark the contents of the stores, too, and you see little traces of the refinements of a luxurious population. Galvanized iron, hardware, farm tools, buckets, flour, harness, and other similar articles, all show that this apparently is a people much given to hard labour, and who as yet have neither time nor inclination for dilettanti work, for fancy articles, and costly luxuries.

Here and there you meet a miserable party of aborigines, hawking nuts or berries about the streets, content with food enough for the immediate cravings of hunger; lazy, degraded, and vicious. What a contrast with the fine, hardy Anglo-Saxon settlers around. One begins to feel proud of his race again, and, after the secluded, *fainéant* life of an Indian station, these new surroundings brace one up body and mind.

Only fifteen years ago this city was a waste of dense jungle, reeking swamp, and barren hill-side, and now it is the progressing capital of a great colony, destined, I firmly believe, to be one of the mightiest cities of the future, as Queensland, if wisely governed, cannot fail to become one of the giant states of the world, when the genius of our race shall have developed her boundless resources, and settled a teeming population over her ample and prolific expanse.

Having been introduced to the Queensland Club, and meeting there some members of both houses of the Colonial Parliament, I was asked to take a look over the "Parliament House," and accompanied by one of the members went accordingly.

It is an oblong structure of imposing dimensions,

with a dome at either end, and a fine ornamented square dome and turret in the centre. The arrangements for members, Speaker, spectators, and officers of the court were most complete, and the ornamentation neither gaudy nor tawdry, but in the best possible taste. There are fine lavatories, an upper and lower library, containing over 9000 volumes; smoking and refreshment-rooms, and numerous private and public chambers for officers and others: the whole cost was 75,000*l.* One has not to be long in the colonies before he finds the magic letters M.P. have scarcely the significance they bear in the neighbourhood of Westminster. But the majority of the Queensland legislators to whom I had the privilege of an introduction, were beyond a doubt earnest, capable, intelligent, and honourable men. There were and are a few exceptions, but on this subject I may have a few remarks to make in a future chapter. From the turret on the roof one gets a magnificnt panoramic view of the city and its suburbs. The river winds completely round it, enclosing it as with a belt of silver on three sides, the bend being occupied by Government House, Parliament House, and the splendidly kept Botanical Gardens, whose trim lawns and terraces, studded with all the beauties of the vegetable world, slope to the water's edge. Queen Street runs from bank to bank of the river, and you can see the masts of the shipping from either end of the street. Towering above the other houses are the Observatory on Spring Hill, the Normal School, Roman Catholic Cathedral, Masonic and Town Halls, and Railway Station; while the elegant Victoria bridge hangs in mid air. One great virtue the Queenslanders possess in common with the *Wise Men of the East*—their hospitality is unbounded.

The servants here, although remarkably well paid, are a great source of anguish to the ladies. As at home, they are the principal domestic grievance. Girls get from ten to twelve shillings a week, men, such as grooms and gardeners, from 2*l.* upwards; but if you say a word of censure or expostulation to them, they consign you to *Jehannam*, and tell you to suit yourself elsewhere. Of course all are not alike, but the majority are dreadfully independent, and too often very insolent.

Queensland is a fine poor man's country. A labourer on the wharves earns his shilling an hour; working men on the roads from six shillings a day; and a tradesman nine to ten shillings, and even more at times. Besides they all want their Saturday and Sunday as holidays, when the consumption of drink is calculated to increase the revenues of the country, to an extent that may certainly gladden the heart of the Treasurer who contemplates a probable deficit, but which saddens the true patriot or earnest statesman. Luxuries are dear—eggs two shillings a dozen, butter half-a-crown a pound; groceries and clothes are also expensive; but as some atonement the best butcher's meat can be bought for 3*d.* to 4*d.* per lb., and vegetables and fruits are cheap and plentiful. A bachelor, boarding out, could live very cheaply here, but a family man, to live in any degree of comfort, needs 500*l.* a year at least.

The climate from April to August is very fine indeed. The sun has certainly registered up to 120° in the shade; but such heat is exceptional, and even then is dry, not the moist relaxing heat of many parts of India. February is generally a wet month, whilst westerly winds prevail in September and October, which brings on colds and throat affections; but on

the whole the climate is bracing, healthy and pleasant, and infinitely to be preferred to that of Bombay or Calcutta. There is no doubt that the colony is wonderfully rich in natural products and has a mighty future before it. Capital, energy, and skill abound, though labour is at present a great difficulty. To a consideration of this question I shall devote some portion of a future chapter.

CHAPTER V.

Regaining health—An Easter trip up the coast—My travelling companion—We travel steerage—Experience of a colonial coasting trip—Ration tea—General discomforts of colonial travel—Across the bar—Our reception by our host—The fishing station—The Dugong—Mode of capture—Its uses—The black fellow assistants—A domestic squabble—Customs of the black fellows—A native battle.

I FOUND letters waiting me on my arrival in the Queensland capital, and received a warm welcome from my kind-hearted cousin and boyhood's companion A.B. Long ago, when two little "callants," we had trudged down to the old boat-shed near the suspension bridge in the "auld fish toon o' Montrose," and there lying down among the dust and shavings, we angled for "podlees" through a hole in the rotting woodwork of the floor, which overhung the lapping waters of the "back sands." What a meeting! My cousin now a prosperous colonial merchant, and I a broken-down wanderer, roaming the world in search of health. Thanks, however, to a fine constitution, the sea air, and my naturally good spirits, I was fast regaining health and strength. I found the Brisbane Turkish Baths invest me with a new lease of energy, and I was very soon able to walk about, and begin to enjoy the novel sense of active locomotion once again.

As Easter drew near, I began to tire of inaction,

and wished to see a little of the country. My cousin acted as agent for an energetic principal living far up the coast, who was seeking to found a new industry, and was gallantly striving to establish a Dugong Fishery, up at Hervey's Bay, near Maryborough. As the Mary River was the chief seat of the sugar industry also, and promised me abundant material for my letters to the *Pioneer*, besides holding out the inducements of good shooting and fishing, I resolved to pay the Dugong Fishery a visit; and I was introduced to a fine young fellow who held a post in the assembly, and who meditated a tour northwards during the Easter holidays.

"Ching," our prospective host, had been warned of our projected visit, and on his behoof we were the custodians of a huge drag-net, cases of brandy, fruit, sugar, flour, onions, tea, and other groceries or stores. The colonial synonym for these is Rations. The destined rations were for the use of Ching and his men in their faraway camp. We also had a copious and plentiful supply of beer and tobacco, for ourselves.

We determined to travel steerage, being prompted thereto both by curiosity and economy. Steamer fares are rather high in Queensland, they were then at all events. Steerage accommodation, from grim experience does not commend itself much to my mind. It was a mistake. The bunks were between decks. The cabin a close, filthy, damp and utterly uncomfortable hole. There was a bar, as there always is. The liquor was vile, as it generally is. The bar, however, was extensively patronized, and the steerage steward seemed to be doing a large business. He generally does, for the colonist on his travels drinks a good deal, although at other times he is temperate, and confines his

libations to tea. The cabin was crowded, women, men and children huddled together, no attempt at ventilation. The tables, tin plates, and iron two-pronged forks, were horribly dirty, and the cookery was execrable. To add to our misery it rained heavily the first afternoon and night, and many of our motley crew were not good sailors. At meal time, the big mis-shapen junks of half-cooked beef were tossed down in big battered dirty tin skillets, and each person helped himself, hewing and hacking off a lump with his sheath-knife if he had one, or else with his pocket-knife. The ship's knives, so far as a cutting edge went, were more like hoop iron, than anything else.

The national beverage, tea, was supplied abundantly, but chips, planks, sticks, faggots, stakes, barge poles, any word of similar import would better describe it, than the word, leaves. An infusion of a crow's nest, would give a fair imitation of it. Remember too, that the sheath and pocket-knives, which did duty as carvers from the common joint, were fragrant and redolent of the strongest "ration" tobacco, and you can then form some faint conception of the Lucullus-like feast of which we were supposed to partake.

Joking apart, steamboat travelling in the Australian colonies, nay more, travelling generally is attended with drawbacks, disadvantages, and *désagréments*, to such an extent as to daunt and discourage all but the most daring. My picture of the steerage accommodation in a coasting steamer is no over-drawn sketch. There is no set place for passengers' luggage as a rule, but it lies piled up all over the deck, exposed to wave and weather. The attendance is unutterably vile, and courtesy and civility are luxuries quite beyond the reach of the poor steerage passenger. The landing-

stages are slippery and unsafe, and are very seldom provided with hand-rails. At none of the wharves almost are there decent waiting-rooms, or cosy shelter for poor faint women and miserable children. The steerage cabins are noisome dens of filth and vermin. Of course there are exceptions, yet I maintain that the steerage accommodation in the greater number of our coasting steamers, is a disgrace to our age and nation.

The perpetual bar-room traffic is an abomination, and should be done away with. Scenes of bestial drunkenness are of far too frequent occurrence on these steamers (although as a rule the colonists are a temperate race): and very little consideration is shown to poor sick women and frail children, who have not the protection of separate cabins, but must run the chance of being cooped up with drunken and desperate men.

On the railways it is nearly as bad. The chief care and first consideration of the colonial official mind is not seemingly the comfort and ease of passengers. Our colonial cousins are certainly a long-suffering, law-abiding, good-natured people in the matter of railway transit, or their indignation would have demanded a radical change in their railway management long ago. It is only very lately that water-troughs have been considered a necessary appendage to a cattle-truck. It is only lately, that it has become possible in Sydney at least, to deposit a parcel for transmission by rail at a central office in town. The old exploded system of forcing you to buy your ticket through a sort of dove-cote orifice, a few minutes before the train starts, is still in vogue in the Queen city of the south. There is a decided difference in this respect between our

American and Australian cousins, and the comparison is certainly not all in favour of the latter.

On the second day, the sunshine put us all in a better humour, and we admired the bold broken outline of the beautiful coast exceedingly. Crossing the bar near Hervey's Bay, to get between Sandy island, and the mainland, we watched the huge curling breakers surge and roar past our tiny-looking cock-boat, bearing us aloft seemingly to instant destruction; then shooting on ahead, they reared their towering crests, that reflected back a thousand prismatic hues from the white sunshine, until they broke in thunder on the cruel rocks, and corrugated sandy bars. At times one paddle-wheel would be fairly out of the water. We had barely depth enough, and the passage was not unattended with risk, but we got safely through. We then steamed up a beautiful series of still reaches, with wooded heights and bosky undulations and vales, stretching far back from the placid water's edge. Sign of habitation there was none. Wild fowl seemed to be abundant, and we were now nearing the feeding-places of the huge dugong. Turning short round a wooded promontory, we descried a whale-boat, manned by two black fellows, and a tanned little Anglo-Saxon mariner, who hailed the steamer and quickly pulled alongside. We were not sorry to quit our steerage companions, and hastily bundling our net and traps into the boat, the little man stepped a square sail, and off we scudded before a smart southerly breeze.

We received a hearty reception from Ching. We could sympathize with each other, for I found him suffering excruciating agony from an acute attack of rheumatism. My knowledge of shampooing, acquired

from long experience of its soothing effects, under the hands of my faithful old Bearer, now served me in good stead. When I had nothing else to do, during my stay, I set to work to shampoo poor Ching, and before I left, I had taught half a dozen gins and black fellows the secret, so that shampooing had become quite one of the acclimatised institutions of the Hervey Bay Dugong Fishery.

Ching had set up his household gods in a very lovely spot. I have the picture clear and distinct in my mind's eye now.

A small clearing of some ten or fifteen acres, surrounded on all sides by the interminable bush, save where in front the sea ripples on the shelving beach, or surges almost noiselessly among the dense belt of mangroves that girds the coast.

When the tide is out, broad mud flats, extending for miles, till the eye meets the wooded heights and white cliffs of Fraser's island on the opposite side of the bay, lie sweltering in the afternoon sun; and on these flats, when the tide is in, innumerable fishes of all sorts find congenial feeding-ground. Huge green turtle, shovel-nosed sharks, stinging rays of enormous size, and the great elephant-headed dugong, all meet here and disport themselves in the creeks and currents of this charming bay. The deep-sea mullet, bream, guard-fish, whiting, flat-head, and many others, are procurable in any quantity; and crabs and oysters of unsurpassed flavour would tempt the epicure to here take up his abiding-place. In the middle of the clearing are a collection of rough sleeping-huts, colonially called "humpies," with one a little larger than the others, which serves as general dining-room, parlour, smoking-room, and library, all rolled into one. There are a

kitchen, a store, a few other nondescript buildings for goats, fowls, &c., all formed of "weather-boards" roughly put together, and roofed with the long light slabs of leathery-looking stringy bark.

Down near the beach are the salting, drying, and boiling-houses, while a wooden tramway running into the sea offers facilities for hauling up boats, nets, and the carcasses of the spoil which the fishing affords. Scattered at intervals on the little ridges near the bush-fringed beach are the *gunyahs* of the aborigines "black fellows," who assist the enterprising owner of the fishery in his toil.

CHING, the owner, is a fine specimen of the adventurous Englishman. He comes of a good old Cornish family; has been at sea for years; has travelled much, and read much; and can tell many a tale of peril and adventure by sea and land, to amuse us when we have "cleared up" after dinner. He has, of course, European assistants, and these with the small tribe of black fellows who hang around the camp, do all the work, and are helping him to open out a new enterprise which deserves well of the colony, and which, were the merits of the dugong oil but once fairly known, would become, I am sure, an industry of some commercial importance.

Harpooning was originally the mode adopted in capturing the dugong, but it has now been superseded by the use of huge nets, which at low water are placed across the creeks which everywhere intersect the flats.

The dugong, with his great bristly snout, and tusks like the sea-horse, comes up at high-water to feed on the *algæ*, or marine grass, which grows luxuriantly in the bay. As the tide recedes, he betakes himself to the creeks, and there gets entangled in the nets. The

boats and black fellows then put out, secure the carcasses, and tow them ashore to be cut up and boiled down for oil, or the flesh salted and preserved in casks like beef.

The oil is unlike anything I ever tasted. It is a pale yellow, clear oil, exceedingly sweet, and forms a perfect substitute for butter. All our cookery in the camp was done with it. It makes capital pastry, fritters, and cakes, and the weakest stomach can retain it. In curries it would be delicious, and it has already won a great reputation in the colonies for pulmonary affections. It is extremely strengthening, and as it can be taken in the ordinary way as food, there is no difficulty in administering it. As a tonic, and as a corrective in diarrhœa and stomach-disorders, it has already proved its worth, and is now extensively used in preference to cod-liver and other oils.

The dugong itself is on a par with the other strange creatures found in this paradoxical land. With a head somewhat resembling that of the elephant without the trunk; tusks something like those of the wild boar; a very minute perforation for an ear; but which can catch the slightest vibration in the air; an eye like a pig; flippers like a seal, and a tail like the sperm-whale, it looks the oddest fish you can imagine. It chews the cud like a cow, and yields delicious milk. It is not an aggressive beast, being extremely retiring, shy, and suspicious.

At high tides the natives used to harpoon them, as I have just stated, and this was a work of great delicacy. With muffled oars and bated breath the silent boat crept noiselessly along. The keen eye of the tracker has discerned the bulky body of his unsuspicious prey. The slightest noise and he would

clear off at once; but nearer and nearer creeps the boat, the tall black fellow in the bows fairly quivering with suppressed excitement. For a moment the glittering harpoon is raised, then, sharp and swift as an arrow, the keen blade pierces the yielding flesh, and the dugong is fairly struck.

It was in fact whaling on a miniature scale, and intensely exciting. A small keg was fastened to the end of the harpoon line. This was followed up, and when the wounded animal rose to the surface to breathe, it was lanced until death ensued. The spoil was then towed ashore, and cut up as already described. Several large orders have now been received for skeletons and skulls for museums. The hide is enormously thick, and makes splendid leather for belting, valves for pumps, drags for carriages, &c. The flesh is very like tender veal, and if salted down, makes delicious bacon, that is, if the name be applicable to fish flesh. It is largely eaten by the farmers and settlers in the neighbourhood. The bones are heavy and solid, make splendid knife handles, and the tusks are the finest ivory known.

No part of the carcass is ever wasted; and when there has been a good haul, the camp presents a busy scene. The tawdry, hideous, old "gins" come up in files from the boat, bearing off huge mangled portions of turtle, dugong, or shark. They are like savages all the world over. One day they will gorge themselves with huge junks of half-roasted meat, roughly thrown on the ashes, the outside charred like charcoal, while the inside is as raw as green hide. Next day, if there is nothing in the net, they make their meal off the refuse scraps that even the dogs have refused the day before; and if bad luck continues, they betake them-

selves to wild plums, roots, berries, snakes, and other vermin. These people make no provision whatever for to-morrow: with them "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" with a vengeance. They seem merry and good-humoured enough as a rule, but they are excitable, and their moods vary much. Louisa, the cook, a pleasant-enough-looking gin, as gins go, aroused us all one morning, with a succession of such hideous yells and piercing cries, that I thought nothing short of murder was being perpetrated. But I was astonished to see the other hands take it so cooly, and felt rather disgusted at the want of feeling displayed, when Ching informed me, "Oh, it's only Louisa getting toko from Fred." Fred, her lord and master, had been a most cheery and amiable fellow in my estimation hitherto. It seems, however, that Louisa had got a new pipe from the store, and demurred to yielding it to her husband, whose covetous eye had at once lit on the treasure.

Her refusal fired his savage nature at once. Seizing her by the hair, he cudgelled her brutally and abused her; but an hour after, when Louisa had been pacified with a pinch of tobacco, she was smiling as usual, and apparently as loving with her tyrant as before.

The power of sight possessed by these people is, I think, the most remarkable thing about them. It is truly astonishing. When Ching, our host, was looking at the steamer through the binoculars, he could not see what was passing half as well as the "gin" standing beside him, and she had but the use of her naked eye. I subsequently had ample evidence of this marvellous faculty of vision, and many stories are rife in colonial back-country circles, confirmatory of my observations. When through my glasses I failed to

discern even the place where the nets lay, Billy and Fred, two of the black boys, or any of the gins, would tell us, standing alongside, not only the number of fish in the net, but what sort of fish they were, whether dugong, turtle, sharks, or saw-fish. This may sound exaggerated, but it is the simple truth.

In the bush, when they wish to communicate with each other, they do so by means of smoke. From the kind of smoke they can tell what event has occurred at vast distances within ten minutes of the occurrence, and this fact also, many of my colonial readers can substantiate. Thus, should a member of the tribe fall off a tree, get hurt, or die, on Fraser's island, fully ten miles away, every mother's son of them on the mainland would know of the occurrence within ten minutes, at least so I was informed.

When death takes place the name of the deceased is never mentioned; and the mourning customs are very curious. The women execute a kind of dance, cutting their heads all the time with a sharp hatchet till covered with blood. They also gash their bodies; and there are few old women but what are so seamed and scarred all over, that you could scarce cover a space the breadth of your thumb without encountering an old wound. They also crop their hair close, and glue tufts of feathers close to the roots. The men show their grief by cutting and lacerating their bodies fearfully with bits of glass. They are constantly fighting amongst themselves, but their mode of combat, as I observed in a former chapter, is certainly unique. If two men wish to fight, they previously arrange the mode between them with all the gravity and punctilio of our own forefathers on like occasions.

Their general plan is to grasp each other by the

shoulder or the neck, and leaning over, with each a knife in his right hand, to cut each other, turn and turn about, on the muscles of the shoulders, across the back, or down the hips and thighs. They begin with surface wounds, but gradually go deeper and deeper, till one or the other thinks he has had enough, and gives in. The vanquished party not unfrequently, smarting under his defeat, calls on his tribe to help him to his revenge.

Signals are sent abroad, a meeting of the tribe convened, and after a grand "corroboree," war is declared. When the opposing parties meet, one or two step out from each side. They have a small wooden shield with which they ward off spear-thrusts and blows. Jumping about and taunting the opposite party, they gradually excite the on-lookers, till suddenly a flight of spears is levelled at the dancing warriors. Avoiding these with the greatest dexterity, dodging, bending, doubling, and twisting, while shouts and cries now arise from either side, the excitement gets intense.

Larger parties now leave the ranks; more spears hurtle through the air, till at last all mix together in a mad *mêlée*, a wild hand-to-hand encounter. Hatchets, knives, clubs, and spears are used until some one or two get severe wounds, when, as if by mutual consent, the battle ceases, everybody's honour is satisfied, and the war is at an end. It is very seldom that any lives are lost in these skirmishes.

Being anxious to see as much of this strange, and to me quite new people as I could during my stay amongst them, I begged and prayed our kind host, to get up a grand corroboree, that I might see with mine own eyes what I had so often heard about. It has been so often well described, that I feel somewhat

diffident in laying my recollections before the reader, but as it forms one of the most interesting reminiscences of my trip to Maryborough, I hope it may arouse the interest of my friends as much as it did my wonder and delight, when first I witnessed the display.

CHAPTER VI.

A corroboree—Discomforts of camp life—Treatment of the natives—The native police—British pluck and Christian courage—How the blacks are dealt with.

ONE evening after a tremendous meal of turtle-flesh and shell-fish, with wild plums by way of dessert, and with the promise of several bottles of grog and a pipeful of tobacco for each man, the tribe numbering from sixty to seventy men, turned out in full fighting costume, consisting simply of streaks of white pipeclay daubed in eccentric patterns over the rude wiry frame, with here and there a hideous blotch of red clay or yellow ochre to relieve the monotony of the more simple black and white. One or two, whose native modesty or sartorial resources were greater than those of their poorer brethren, added a few cockatoo plumes to their spiral ringlets, and stood forth magnificently arrayed in nature's garments. Standing in a circle, with fires of bark gleaming fitfully all through the camp; the sombre mass of shadow from the pathless bush forming a weird background; the rows of ragged, haggard, withered "gins" squatting on their hams, with their rags around them, more repulsive in their dirt and ugliness than any mob of ourang-outangs, the picture was truly a wild one. They have no musical instruments; but the gins, in a shrill treble, begin a wailing song, with long-drawn cadences, abrupt stops,

and sudden rises and falls, ending in a prolonged half-guttural hum and peculiar liquid half-ringing sound, like y'ling, y'ling, y'ling, not at all unlike in modulation and tone, to the faint far-off murmur of a church bell.

The men, with their deep bass, then join in, and each cadence is so distinctly graduated, each sudden break so entirely in accord, each stamp of the foot, each motion of the body so homogeneous, that the time is absolutely perfect. It seems, however, to come naturally to them. Next the gins beat time, by slapping a folded piece of cloth held tightly between the thighs, whilst some of them clash two boomerangs together with a sharp click, which sounds something like the music of rude castanets.

They go through all sorts of antics—stamp the foot on the ground like a deer when it is alarmed; sway the body from side to side; raise, extend, depress, or wave their hands and arms; but all act in the most complete concert, and all seem actuated by but one idea. When the leader makes a faint chirruping sound, the men stop singing, but redouble their violent antics, whilst the excitement gets greater and greater. Leaving the ranks, they spin round, toss their arms, stamp their feet, shout out hoarse cries of encouragement and approbation to each other; the shrill wailing treble of the women audible through it all. The dusky forms, with their streaks of ghastly white, whirl and gyrate in quaint outlandish evolutions. The camp-fires flicker and flare, and while the dance and song culminate in a fierce outburst of cries and howls, the myriads of stars look down on the lonely bush, and the cold night-wind sweeps by in moaning gusts. At the end of each corroboree the men go through any amount of laugh-

ing criticism on each other's performances, and then they prepare for the next representation. Each corroboree is a complete act in itself, and is supposed to represent some event in their daily life. It was to me one of the most absorbing sights I had ever seen; and the evident interest we took in their doings seemed much to delight the poor savages.

Camping-out, however, is not without its reverse side; it is a hard, uncomfortable life. Sandflies and mosquitoes, when one is without curtains at night, are most intolerable plagues. The humpies are, after all, but poor substitutes for a neat little well-furnished cottage. There is not a chair in the camp, sheets are a luxury unknown, and if you expect to have your boots blacked, the nearest approach to that operation will be to rub them yourself with a piece of putrid shark's fat.

When a shark gets into the nets, the haul is certainly exciting; and the shooting at rabbit, Wonga-pigeon, or bush-turkey is not bad: but the long walk through the mud, with the hot sun scorching you; the weary pull out to the nets and back, with black, rank tobacco as your only standby, rather takes the romance out of the affair. One soon gets a surfeit of it, and begins to long again for the comforts and conveniences of city life.

The treatment of the poor dusky aborigines, by the Queensland government, indeed their treatment by the Australian governments generally, is not a matter for much pride or congratulation. We occasionally hear with a thrill of horror, that another parcel of redskins have been "wiped out" by the United States soldiers. Well-meaning philanthropists make spasmodic but abortive efforts at intervals to get government to

interfere actively in abrogating slavery in Cuba, but few, very few, ordinary newspaper readers, we imagine, at home, ever give a thought to the poor "black fellows" of Queensland, and yet the Queensland government stands charged with a callous disregard of their first duty towards these fast-lessening tribes of savages, and with the systematic perpetration of abominable cruelties, that would disgrace even Tartar, Zulu, or Bashi-Bazouk. The facts are well known among Queenslanders themselves. But the black fellows are repulsive clients. They are not interesting protégés to the squatter aristocracy, the money-grubbing storekeepers, or the polemical sectaries who in many cases represent religion. The working man has not arisen in his might, to claim them on the platform of Man and Brother. "Let it slide," says expediency and indifference; and so the poor savages are fast being "improved off" the face of the earth. There is no room for them on their native soil. Civilization in the shape of cattle and sheep, stockriders, wandering diggers, and goldsprospectors, find that their presence is incompatible with its requirements, and the survival of the fittest receives another illustration of its stern logic.

A clever and authoritative writer in *The Australian* magazine, on this subject says,—

"Probably no worse system of dealing with aboriginal races has ever been adopted than that in use in Australia; and the system is probably worse at the present time than it ever was. Our authorities maintain, systematically, one function of government, and one only, in dealing with the first residents, and that is, extermination. This action, as a policy, is of course neither professed nor acknowledged, very likely the

circumstances in connexion with it are not even known to many of the functionaries who conduct the formal official routine; but still the work goes on regularly."

He goes on to describe the *modus operandi*, with all the graphic vividness of one who knows his facts, and can vouch for their accuracy. His *exposé* amounts to a virtual impeachment of the Queensland government. The superintendent of the absentee squatter is a man who may never have seen a black fellow in his life. "His instructions, if he have any," pursues the writer, "are, if he anticipates annoyance from the blacks, to send for the native police. If he should chance on signs of their being in the neighbourhood, he sends for the officer in charge at once. If a travelling tribe has crossed the run, it is possible that they may have startled the cattle off their camps, and in the season when bullocks are 'topping up,' such a scare may take from off the fat mob—say three hundred beasts—something like four pounds of tallow each, worth four pence per pound; a value of some twenty pounds sterling, a very serious matter."

Therefore the missive is sent, and Lieutenant Blood, with Gigwa, Wabrigan, and the rest of the gang, ride up some day soon. Each of the troopers has one spur only; consequently, one side of the horse goes faster than the other, and the result is a peculiar amble, called the "Policeman's jog."

They arrive at the "station."

"Good morning, Brown," says Blood; "niggers about? Sold the Mazeppa colt yet?"

Next morning they take a circuit of ten miles, and quarter the ground back and forward till they hit on a solitary track; they run this track with a speed and certainty that the trained bloodhound alone can equal,

no impress on the soil, no bent blade of grass escapes them; presently more tracks join, all going in the same direction; they dismount and hobble their horses in a hollow. Wabrigan and Charley peel themselves of every rag of uniform, and glide on a-head, crawling and dodging; they come back in an hour, there is a camp of blacks on the edge of a scrub two miles off. By the first streak of day the party is mounted, and they push quietly but rapidly over the ground. When the smoke of the fires is seen, they rush in at the gallop. The alarm is given: the camp is empty in a few seconds; but the troopers are off their horses and into the scrub carbine in hand, throwing off their clothes as they go in hot pursuit. The Lieutenant waits outside, smoking his pipe, and meditating over the deal for the "Mazeppa" colt, which he has opened with the Super.

"Shots are heard; the troopers come back after an interval; they have cut off some half-dozen of the last of the fugitives, and their dead bodies are lying in nameless gullies under bush and thicket.

"The leading men of the tribe have, of course, escaped; broken-hearted women and wailing children shriek to heaven and appeal against the horrible 'white-fellow.' 'They had touched neither him nor his bullocks—what a fearful God is the God of the white man—what a powerful fiend he must be!'

"'Walli, walli, areiro! the days of the blacks are numbered. We are slaughtered to feed the dogs, to fatten the bullocks of the white man!'

"Now, it is possible enough that Brown himself never pulled a trigger on a black, and it is as likely as not that he may never even hear of what Blood's men have done in the way of 'duty.' Besides, he would be in-

finitely shocked and indignant if any one proposed to hold him accountable for what took place at the edge of that scrub.

"Moreover, his proprietors never know anything about the matter, and being merely business speculators, working the station with bank-money, they consider that questions of policy and humanity in reference to the blacks are the very last matters that they have anything to do with. 'Blacks on our property! why, then, they are trespassing. It's clearly the business of the authorities to turn them off.' That's all they know or understand about the matter.

"Meantime, these half-dozen bronze corpses lie in their blood in that acacia thicket, and so it is because the tribe they belong to, *or some other tribe unknown, are suspected of having gone near the Gondary cattle-camp.*

"Of course this is no business of the station-owners, or of any one else—their concern with Gondary is simply one of pounds, shillings, and pence, and as long as the money comes out right, what more is wanted?

"So the station is sold at a profit to somebody else, who works on in the same way, and Brown's proprietors pocket each 10,000*l.* clear gain, and they are generally complimented on their 'pluck and enterprise,' and at public dinners they invariably reply to all toasts given to pioneers and squatters.

"And this is the way that our standard religion of the nineteenth century deals with the facts of life and humanity."

The above is written by a hard-headed, practical Scotchman, who knows the country well, and has lived in the interior for many years. He is not likely to under-estimate the predatory proclivities and treacherous, bloodthirsty character of the aborigines, but

surely his picture, which is no overdrawn sketch, constitutes a grave impeachment of a professedly Christian and civilized government, and steps should surely be taken by the Queensland executive to remove this heavy reproach from their door.[1]

That the picture is not overdrawn, my own experience and knowledge bear witness. Not long ago near Cooktown, almost within gunshot of a populous town, a whole tribe of poor black fellows were shot down in cold blood. Several of the wretched creatures, to escape the bullets of the police, swam out to sea and never returned to shore. The sharks probably had a feast. Out of a party of thirty-five men, women, and children, if I remember rightly, only three women and one child were allowed to escape the revolvers and "persuasions" of the police.

On another occasion in northern Queensland, two white men had been speared. The whites met and determined to hunt the blacks out of the district. A party was organized. They were armed with revolvers. Well mounted and fully equipped, they set out on their expedition. They were not desirous of making captives. They did not know the guilty parties. Their object was to take black lives, and they cared not a jot whether the innocent suffered with the guilty. Could the fiercest Corsican vendetta, stretched to its extremest limit, equal this? Our brave guerillas then went forth on their mission of blood. They were sober British subjects, not Indians on the war-path, not Zulus or Arab slave-stealers, but Queensland borderers. They came upon a tribe of blacks camped near a water-hole, as the lagoons or desert pools are there called. Fearful of reprisals, if they *were* the

[1] See Note A, Appendix.

guilty parties, or apprehensive of danger at the hands of the whites, the black men, many of them, took to the water, and diving like water-fowl, tried to elude the bullets of their foes. It was a vain hope. Our gallant band of white men surrounded the water-hole and deliberately "*potted*" the poor wretches, as they swam about in wild terror, and in that one water-hole fifty black fellows were murdered in cold blood by these heroic pioneers of progress.

The white man has ousted the black fellow from his own ancestral domain. In nine cases out of ten, he is himself the aggressor. In any case he is the more educated, the stronger, the more enlightened; to his eternal infamy be it said, he is often the more bloodthirsty, cruel, treacherous, and savage. My story is true. My informant had it from the unblushing lips of a participant in the dastardly deed.

The commissioner of police in his report for last year, 1878, says, "The complaints of cattle-killing and hut-robbing by the blacks along the northern coast, from Cairns to the north of Cooktown, are never ending, *and never will cease as long as there are blacks there.*" The italics are mine. "The whole coast from the Mulgrave to the Mossman, is studded with timber-getters and settlers, by whom the blacks are disturbed and prevented from obtaining their natural food in that direction, while on the other side of the range the country is all occupied by small cattle-stations, which again cut them off from their hunting and fresh-water fishing-grounds. The intervening scrub is small, affording but a scanty supply of fruits in their season, and the natives are thus literally starving, and take advantage of the cover afforded by the scrub to make sudden raids on the cattle and huts, which is rendered

more easy by the carelessness of the owners, the huts being left unguarded and the stations insufficiently looked after. Too much dependence is placed on the police, and too much expected from them, the ordinary precautions that all persons should take for the safety of their lives and property being almost systematically neglected."

The last paragraph, part of an extract from "*The Queenslander*," is pregnant with meaning, and affords but one more instance of the cursed system of centralization, and beggarly dependence on government, in every affair of life, from building a bridge or courthouse, down to putting up a fence or locking a stable-door, which is one of the most contemptible characteristics of colonial national life. But of this more anon.

CHAPTER VII.

Start for Maryborough—A colonial conveyance—A drive through the bush—Mosquitoes—A bush inn—We reach Maryborough—The sugar-cane country—Alford sugar-estate—Method of cultivation—Yengarrie factory—Mode of manufacture—The cheap labour question—Kanaka recruiting—Burning questions of the day—Class antagonism.

AFTER we had spent a very pleasant week with Ching, during which, my constant consumption of dugong oil considerably increased my weight, it became necessary for us to think of making a start, as my companion's leave would soon expire. We had some good shooting, and enjoyed several exhibitions of the marvellous skill and wonderful accuracy of aim, and dexterity of the black fellows, with their boomerangs and spears. I bagged numbers of bronze-wing pigeons, black cockatoos, parrots, and rabbits on Woody island; but we had to go, and from a neighbouring German settler, Ching managed to secure the loan of a spring-cart.

On the 20th March, we bade adieu to our kind host, his dusky retainers and bronzed assistants, and plunged into the forest. Never shall I forget that day! It was real downright torture, from start to finish. Our conveyance, by some inexplicable misdirection of meaning, or grim cynical satire, was denominated a spring-trap.

Anything more approaching to the condition of utter and uncompromising springlessness could not be conceived. It took a quarter of an hour's hard work pulling, lashing, and objurgating, to get our horse to start, and when he did start his chief tendency was to stop again. For full eight hours did that wretched animal make a miserable pretence of dragging our cart, over a bush road, which more resembled the site of some ancient village built in the primitive style on piles, than anything else. The village had disappeared, but the piles remained. At every yard we went bump over a stump, smash over a snag, souse into a hideous mud-hole, or crash against a prostrate log, till every individual muscle and joint, and bone and sinew ached again. Then the mosquitoes! It mattered not that we tore branches from the trees, and wildly thrashed each other, and them, in the extremity of our agony. The dead lay piled in the bottom of the spring-cart, but still legions of indomitable blood-suckers—envenomed kinsfolk and avengers of the slain—would come trooping on, till faint from loss of blood, hoarse with vituperation, utterly disjointed and demoralized—we hailed the welcome streak of light in the distance,—that told us of a break in the forest. When we emerged into the open, got on the telegraph track, and felt the fresh wind playing on our fevered brows, we left our scourges behind us, and, save the jolting, got on tolerably well.

About five miles from Maryborough we came upon a pretty winding creek, with a neat rustic bridge spanning the stream. On the further bank we descried a public-house, and as the storm-tossed mariner hails the friendly beacon, so from our souls did we long for a drink. Accordingly we redoubled our frantic

endeavours to infuse some motion into our jaded horse, and made for The Sawyer's Arms, into which blessed haven we staggered, and in faint voices gasped for beer. Such was my first experience of bush travel: I fervently hoped it might have been the last. How I longed for the stately elephant, the once-despised palkee; even the "ferocious dhoolie," or a *bhylee*, would have been a God-send. Anything better than that murderous spring-cart.

Maryborough presented the usual incongruous jumble of mean huts, paddocks full of charred stumps, squat public-houses, imposing weatherboard stores with gaudy signs, and all the quaint, broadly marked contrasts and contradictions of a thriving colonial town. There were not wanting many evidences of progress, industry, and wealth. The townspeople seemed to be an active, energetic, pushing community. One or two of the hotels and churches, the court-house, and several of the chief stores, were quite equal to kindred structures in the metropolis. There was a handsome well-laid-out reserve, for a botanic garden, in the heart of the town, and a considerable amount of small shipping in the river.

I was anxious, however, to get out to the sugar plantations, and receiving a hearty and cordial invitation from a "brither Scot," Farquhar by name, I bade my companion good-bye, and started for Alford sugar-estate, accompanied by my kindly and courteous host. Alford stands on a fertile eminence, overlooking a series of fat lowlands, splendidly cultivated, and bounded by the muddy, sluggish stream, which gives its name to the town. The house is nicely situated in the midst of a well kept garden. It is comfortably built. The walls inside are decorated profusely with

curios from the South Sea Islands. Farquhar was one of the first planters to import Kanakas from the archipelago of the Pacific. In the verandah, a comfortable hammock depends from the rafters. The *mise en scène* reminds me very much of an Indigo planter's bungalow. It is a truly tropical picture.

Cane in all directions; the air sultry and still, and floods of bright sunshine touching up the rolling billows of green sugar-cane with points and flashes of gold and emerald, till the whole valley by the river seems like a scene transported bodily from Aladdin's garden of delights. The horizon is bounded, at no great distance, by the gloomy bush lines; the river winds sluggishly along its muddy channel; the farther bank, draped with tropical creepers and matted scrub, in deep shadow; and the buildings and high chimney-stalks of Eaton Vale, Alford, and the Central factory up the river, bold and distinct against the sky-line.

It is a rich valley indeed. The soil is a deep, dark mould, easily worked, and the crops are simply magnificent. Notwithstanding a severe and long-continued drought, the cane is luxuriant, and the planters had every expectation of a good out-turn. It was now the slack season. Manufacture has been finished, and planting was nearly over.

The canes are planted in rows, on ridges thrown up by the plough, or, where the undulations are too steep, on banks earthed up by the coolies. The rows are from five to six feet apart. The cuttings from which the sowings or plantings are made are laid on the ridge about a foot apart, slightly sloping, and the first shoots appear in from five to six weeks after planting. In

the rich bottoms the cuttings are laid in the hollows, and then earthed up from the ridges; in any case the "stools" are all earthed up about the roots, when the plant gets about knee high. The fields are kept carefully cleaned between the rows, and when the dry leaves begin to accumulate, these are all stripped off and laid regularly between the lines of plant. This is technically called "trashing."

Cane which has been planted early, say in August, will, under favourable circumstances, be ready to cut in the month of August following; but if planted in December or January, and up to the middle of April, it will not be cut till the following August twelve months! thus taking, roughly, a year and a half to come to maturity. Less than 4½ feet of clear cane is never cut, and it not unfrequently cuts out in lengths of over 10 feet, thicker than a man's wrist. When cut, the "trash" is collected and burnt, the "stools" earthed up by the plough, and the crop allowed to stand for a second cutting. In the richest parts of this valley as many as five and six crops are got from the one planting. In the higher lands, farther back from the river, new crop is put in every third or fourth year.

The varieties of cane are very numerous, the most common being the Bourbon, the Gingham, the long yellow, the China straight cane, and several dark-coloured kinds from Java. The favourite kinds are called Rapol and Mera, both quick-growing varieties. Experiments are still being made with all sorts, but those enumerated above are perhaps on the whole the best.

Rust attacks the plant occasionally, and very un-

frequently the *borer*. Floods are of frequent occurrence, and cause great loss, whilst a year of drought will retard the growth of the plant. But, on the whole, the industry is in a flourishing state, and a vast amount of capital is now employed in the different works. The average yield is about a ton to a ton and a half of manufactured sugar per acre. As much as four tons an acre have been produced from some lands on this estate, but such an enormous yield is, of course, very exceptional.

At Eaton Vale, and on some other estates, the old method of manufacture is still adopted. The juice is expressed, boiled in a battery of pans, placed in the vacuum pans, and then put through the centrifugals; very much the same treatment as is adopted at Rosa, the great sugar-works of the North-West Provinces, near Shajehanpore, in India. The greatest establishment in the whole of Australia, however, is at Yengarrie, some miles up the river. More than a quarter of a million has been expended on the purchase of the patent, and on the works here, and through the kindness of Mr. Cran, one of the partners, we were shown all over the vast pile of buildings.

The process here pursued is that which has been patented in France, and is called the "lime process." It is the most complete and least wasteful method yet invented, and only in France, by the original patentees, and here, by Messrs. Tooth and Cran, is it yet in operation. The Yengarrie firm have several plantations of their own, but they also manufacture the juice of any other plantation on the river which likes to send it to them.

The plan pursued is as follows:—

The juice is expressed by the common rolling-mill.

It is then mixed with lime-water from slaked stone-lime. The lime prevents the juice fermenting, and enables it to be kept for an indefinite time without losing any of its saccharine strength. When mixed it is run into large punts, containing 5000 gallons each, and these are taken up the river to the Yengarrie wharf, where there is an elaborate and costly pumping apparatus for lifting the liquor up to the factory. The juice from the Yengharrie home plantations is forced through pipes from distances varying from two to five miles. The pipes are carried over hill and dale, through bush, and swamp, and creek; there are mud-traps and air-valves at intervals, by which the pipes can be at any time cleaned, and the whole arrangements are as complete as human skill and ingenuity, backed by capital, could make them. The forcing-pump machinery is a beautiful specimen of iron-work, and both it and the crushing machinery (huge masses of metal perfectly finished) have all been made close by, at the Maryborough foundry. Better work could not be turned out in England.

When juice from other growers is sent in for manufacture, the arrangement is as follows:—The liquor is gauged by Baume's saccharometer, 10° being taken as the standard of density, and the latest Sydney and Melbourne sugar-market quotations as the standard of price. A pound of raw manufactured sugar is allowed for every gallon of liquor. Thus 5000 gallons of liquor, at a density of 10° Baume, would be accepted by the Yengarrie factory as representing 5000 lbs. of raw manufactured sugar, and the grower would be paid at current market-rates accordingly. Any increase or decrease of the density, above or below 10°, would be increased or decreased rateably in the price. This

arrangement seems fair, and, at all events, it has pleased both parties hitherto.

The vastness of the Yengarrie works bewildered me. The process is, of course, a long and intricate one; but the salient features in it, I believe, are these:—

The liquor, mixed with lime, is treated with carbonic acid gas, made in a lime-kiln on the grounds, as the first operation; this turns the lime into carbonate of lime; and, after numberless operations, the lime is got rid of by steam-pressure. In our crude Indian way, half the saccharine matter is lost by fermentation. By the lime process all fermentation is made an impossibility, and the full amount of saccharine matter is obtained. Not an atom is wasted. The sugar made here is beautifully white, but the crystals are small, as the trade will not buy large-grained sugar. The workshops are replete with every modern invention—lathes, rolling and planing machines, machines for drilling and punching; in fact, everything that is necessary for making and repairing any part of the vast array of machinery which is used.

Animal charcoal for refining the sugar is manufactured on the spot, and numerous lines of tramway rails lead far into the bush in every direction, for bringing in the enormous quantities of firewood in daily use, and for taking away the refuse lime and waste of crushed cane, which, when mixed and allowed to rot, makes one of the finest manures in the world.

The managers on the estates are fine, manly young fellows. They get about 200*l.* a year, with free house and rations; overseers about 80*l.* a year; and the skilled white labourer from 25*s.* to 30*s.* a week, with food. The most of the field-work is done by Kanaka

boys, from the New Hebrides, Solomon, Santa Cruz, and Loyalty Islands, in the South Seas.

The importation of these aboriginals has given great umbrage to the white immigrants, and their continued employment or non-employment has been one of the burning questions of the day. The whites argue that they have left home and friends, seduced by the representations of the Queensland government, that they would find constant work at enhanced rates, cheap food, a grand climate, free institutions, and a glorious future of wealth and ease. Free institutions they certainly get. Manhood suffrage is the rule here. There is no property qualification or education test. Six months' residence gives you a vote.

The fact is, for an honest, industrious, patient working man there is always employment here. He can earn good wages, and save money, and eventually own his own house and garden, and certainly never know want. But what is the fact? From my own observation, which, though short, has been searching and impartial, I do believe that a more improvident, lazy, self-indulgent, impertinent set of fellows never cursed a colony with their presence than those agitators and radicals, who falsely call themselves the leaders of the working men, organize themselves into leagues and unions, and are the originators of the present cry against cheap or abundant coloured labour. Their one object is to keep away capital seemingly, and prevent the colony from going ahead. They will *not* work; they are irreclaimable loafers; and their chief aim is how to secure a wage that will keep them in grog and tobacco, and administer to their sensual appetites, without the penalty of giving an equivalent of fair labour in return. Be it distinctly understood,

I do not mean the honest, hard-working, intelligent labourer. I only stigmatize the clap-trap orators, who try to manipulate the vote of the working man.

Capitalists, too, these men conveniently forget—at least, they ignore the fact—have left home and friends, have surrendered many of the comforts and associations that make life worth having, and they certainly did not come so far and risk so much merely that a mob of worthless democrats should batten on their wealth, grow fat on the results of their energy and skill, and requite them with insolence and insubordination. In fact, at present the relative positions of classes here are turned upside down. "Jack is as good as his master and a great deal better." On some of the plantations where only white labour was used, prostitution and drunkenness prevailed. The men were insolent, disobedient, and lazy; and were a gold-field discovered in the vicinity, or should the whim take them, they would be off, bag and baggage, at a moment's notice, leaving your crop to rot, and you to go to ruin, for all they cared.

Under the Polynesian Labour Act, the Kanakas are recruited on the islands, upon a three-years' engagement to work on the plantations. They get a free passage to Queensland and back, 6*l.* a year, and a certain quantity of clothing; and are housed, fed, and have medical attendance at their employers' expense. No doubt they require constant looking after, as they are lazily inclined; but in good hands they are sober, tractable, and intelligent; and I am convinced the sugar industry would never have attained its present proportions without them.

Another burning question, much debated among the higher classes when I was at Maryborough, was the

resumption of squatting lands. On the one hand, the squatters say that wool and stock are indubitably the staples of the country, and that they have contributed in no small degree to make the colony what she has become; that if they have no security of tenure, capital will be withheld; if their lands are resumed or given over to the selector, they must dispose of their stock at a ruinous sacrifice; and that, seeing they have been the pioneers of these great industries, have surmounted difficulties, have taken their lives in their hands, as it were, and put capital, energy, health, comfort, their all in their venture, they should in common fairness be allowed to reap the fruit.

They say, moreover, that the richest lands are the scrub lands and the lands near the coast; that these are pre-eminently suited for agriculture, and not suited for squatting; and that therefore these lands should be taken up first.

On the other hand, the objectors to this view say that the squatters have enjoyed far more than the reasonable fruits of their work already; that emigrants are invited out to the country by government under promise of getting a portion of land, but that when they arrive here the land is not forthcoming; that they do not want to take the fairest portion of the runs from the squatter—he has his pre-emptive and other rights—but let the selector, who is willing to spend as much capital on the land as the squatter, have an equal chance of obtaining a share. That the squatters do not, man for man, employ more labour or contribute to the expenses of government, or advance the weal of the community in any greater degree than other classes: so that therefore they should not be more favoured or protected than the selector or emigrant who wants to

farm a piece of land, and is willing to pay for it. The squatter should certainly be reasonably protected; but when his lease is up he must take the usual commercial risk of having a renewal of it refused; a higher offerer willing to outbid him; or an enhancement of rent required as the result of greater demand. Party feeling runs very high, mutual recriminations are indulged in, classes are estranged, and so the contest rages from bad to worse. In the above remarks, I have endeavoured to give the view of the planters and squatters on the subject of labour, but I may further on have more so say, regarding both the labour question, and the land laws.

I do not wish to be understood as saying that there is not a large class of honest, capable working men in the colony, or that all the members of Parliament are weak and useless; but owing to the manhood vote many of the constituencies allow the beer interest and the professional political agitators to have far too much influence.

Black labour, I consider, might safely and with reason be excluded from the towns, and only used in plantations, and the Chinese should be made to contribute more than they do to the expenses of government; but that all black labour should be excluded from a tropical country like northern Queensland in obedience to a cry from prejudiced and unlettered sham working men is monstrous.

I have spoken with all classes and conditions of people since my arrival in the colony, and the evidences of mutual jealousy are very painful. The majority of the white working men have exaggerated ideas of their own importance. They want large pay for little work. The towns are jealous of each other, and all cry out

for this and that improvement. In the mad scramble for the limited amount of funds at the disposal of government, each member asks for far more than he can possibly get for his particular constituency, hoping that by asking for all, he may get possibly a fractional part. In the words of the old Scotch proverb, "If ye bode for a silk goon ye'll maybe get a sleeve o't," seems to be a favourite policy. This breeds a narrow-minded, parochial way of looking at things. I am really trying to be fair to the members, but I do think there is a want of breadth, a subservience of national and imperial to local wants, and a jealousy and petty rivalry between classes and localities that embitters party warfare, and materially retards the general progress of the country. As has been forcibly said by a well-known colonial writer, "We are cursed with centralization, while commercial dishonesty and corrupt government are the dry rot of our boasted civilization."

CHAPTER VIII.

Return to Brisbane—A ride by rail to Ipswich—Scenery on the line—Venality of legislators—The Bathurst burr—Grass seeds—The *Sida retusa*—Ipswich—The Grange Stud farm—The horse trade with India—An Indo-Australian trading company—Excellence of Australian stock.

On my return to Brisbane I one day took a run up to Ipswich, to view the far-famed stud farm of the Hon. Joshua Bell, one of the best-appointed stock-breeding establishments in Queensland. My companion was a merry, sporting young sub., (what we would call in Tirhoot a *pucca admi*,) who was now on the Governor's staff, but had served for some years in Bombay and Poona. It was a pleasure to meet an old Indian, in the land of the kangaroo and eucalyptus, and you may be sure we took to each other at once.

The ride up to Ipswich presents few noticeable features. The country shows numerous traces of clearing and settlement, but the old primeval forest or bush still holds undisputed sway over the greater part of the landscape.

The rail is on the narrow-gauge pattern, has long single carriages, nicely furnished, with a seat running down all the length on either side, like an elongated omnibus. And there is a platform at each end, where you can enjoy your weed if so minded. We first passed several neat kitchen-gardens, all cultivated by

Chinamen; then, through some heavy cuttings, and finally plunged into the interminable and inevitable bush. In the bush there is no restriction whatever on timber-cutting; and gaunt, withered, leafless trees stretch out their ghostly arms in all directions. A fearful waste goes on, and in time will no doubt be felt; but at present the chief thought that occurs to one is, how this seemingly endless forest is ever to be cleared.

A drive through the thick scrub soon impresses you with an idea of the vastness of the timber-supply, and you no longer wonder at people being lost in the bewildering mazes of this eternal bush. Till we near Ipswich the soil seems arid and poor, and numerous grass-trees stud the partly-cleared slopes. This grass-tree looks for all the world like a Busby, or Highlander's bonnet, stuck on a twisted pole. From the top hangs down the withered tuft of dried grass; above is the green feathery plume of living grass; and from the centre springs out a long, thin wand with seed-vessels at the end, resembling a bombardier's sponge.

We are here in a coal country, and several mines have already been opened and profitably worked. Near Ipswich the soil gets darker and richer; and here, a few years ago, cotton was grown in considerable quantities, but owing to the difficulty of getting cheap labour, cultivation has gradually died out. Under the Industrial Act a bonus was given to all and sundry who might introduce any new industry into the colony, and under this stimulus the cotton farmers struggled on for a time. As soon, however, as the bonus was withdrawn, cotton-growing was given up as being too costly a process to pay. Silk was also tried, and one far-sighted individual, with a little newspaper influence,

got a sum of 1500*l.* voted by the Parliament, 750*l.* of which was to be cash down and the remainder when he produced a certain quantity of silk or cocoons. The thing turned out to be a flagrant job. An appearance was certainly made of starting the industry; but when the 750*l.* had been pocketed, the whole affair was put up for sale. It is currently reported here that when the members voted the money, they did so knowing that no *bonâ fide* attempt at business would ever be made, but they also knew that if the money were not voted, some of them would be attacked by the paper for which this pure-souled speculator wrote! Such was the tale, told to me by an Australian patriot, and I was informed then, and subsequent experience has confirmed the truth of the unsavoury allegation, that similar jobs are and have been by no means uncommon, and that, however much there may be to admire in connexion with the public policy and material progress of Australian statesmen, and Australia generally, gross venality and rampant jobbery are, alas, a too frequent and common reproach against many of her most prominent legislators. When I say prominent, I mean not so much those who are prominent for talent, ability or integrity, but those who are forward and prominent by reason of their shameless effrontery. There is generally much reckless mud-throwing between such members in a colonial senate. During every great debate, indeed, the Parliament House in Sydney is seldom spoken of otherwise than as the Macquarrie Street Bear Garden. In all justice let it be said, that the sinners are few in number, but then they are sinners of *such* enormity. A few representatives of the people in Sydney are bad, very bad, *ravenous*.

As we whirled along in our comfortable though narrow carriage, the much-dreaded Bathurst burr was pointed out to me, growing plentifully by the side of the track. This is a terrible enemy to the pastoral farmer. There is an Act in force for its extirpation, as it proves such a scourge to the wool-grower, for when the burr gets in the fleece of a sheep it becomes a sorry picture. There is no way of getting it out again, and the whole fleece is spoiled.

Out west there is another kind of grass, the seed of which not only enters the fleece, but actually pierces the skin, and is the immediate cause of death to great numbers of valuable animals. This seed has a sharp point, shaped not unlike an arrow with a barb on only one side. It is a much and justly-dreaded pest. One owner I talked to told me he had, a few years ago, to burn ten thousand fleeces, which were quite matted and spoilt by it. When the sheep were shorn, the seeds were found sticking like pins in a cushion all over the bodies of the poor beasts, and fully one-half of them died from the irritation and pain. The introduction of the thistle into New Zealand, where it has since become a public calamity, requiring special legislation and severe punitive measures to secure its extirpation, should have taught caution; but here also a plant, the *Sida retusa*, was introduced for the sake of its fibre. It has spread, and is now such a pest that nearly all the natural pasture near the city has been spoilt by it; and although it produces excellent fibre, the cost of preparation is so great, at the present rates of labour, that it will not pay to extract it.

Ipswich, before the railway was opened, was the point to which all the wool and produce from the interior was brought. The river is navigable up to the

town for small steamers, and most of the stores for the interior were despatched from this place. It is still a thriving-looking town, but the rail has shorn it of some of its former importance. There are fine grammar schools and beautiful gardens; and, surrounded by its amphitheatre of wooded hills, it looks a bright little picture as it nestles in the hollow by the stream.

A very high railway and foot-bridge is thrown across the river here, yet the river is so subject to tremendous floods that this extreme altitude is not excessive. The wharves, and even the offices and buildings on the banks below, are all built with sharp prows pointing up stream, to enable them to stem the tremendous floods which annually occur. The stream is deep but narrow, and a rise of over sixty feet in the twenty-four hours has frequently been recorded.

After looking through the town, we drove out to the Grange Stud-farm, belonging, as I have before stated, to the Hon. J. P. Bell, one of the first breeders of blood-stock in the whole colony. His manager, Mr. Kellett, at the time of my visit, was eager to send a shipment of young broken-in stock to India. One of the great drawbacks to exporters hitherto has been that companies will not insure against individual loss. They will insure the whole shipment, but not any particular animal in the batch. This, shippers tell me, has done much to prevent good horses being sent out.

Dealers are on the look-out all over the southern colonies, picking up cheap cattle wherever they can. These are forwarded to yards and paddocks near Melbourne. They are never handled, but shipped as they are. What wonder, then, that we too often find the animals vicious and intractable when they reach India. Now, what these gentlemen here want is to

send a batch of stock, bred and handled by themselves, and kept out of the dealers' yards entirely. It surely would not be a difficult thing to raise the necessary capital, and in India, China, Singapore, Burmah, Java, and the East generally, there is a constant demand for good horses at remunerative prices.

Why could not an Indian and Australian company be inaugurated? Two steamers, built specially to suit the requirements of carrying live stock, might be put on. There is not much danger of a tempestuous passage through the Java seas. Horses, Australian wines, tinned fruits, wool, Australian ale, and many other products, would form a cargo that would find a ready sale in India; while, in return, woolpacks and gunny bags from the jute mills of Calcutta, cottons, shirtings, canvas, &c., from the Elgin Mills, Allahabad, and the Bombay factories, dyes, spices, rice, and all the other productions of the East, would form a valuable return cargo, and a magnificent trade might be inaugurated between these, the two greatest dependencies of the Empire. Even the obstructiveness of home manufacturers, and the bitter hatred of cheap labour of the democrats and unionists in Australia itself, will not be able eventually to hinder such a venture. The working-man vote may retard the movement; but as population, wants, and capital increase—as the stock-raisers find they must seek profitable markets abroad—then such a movement as I have advocated by word and pen, in the colonial press and among thinking colonists, ever since I set foot in the colony, will most assuredly be organized. I venture to predict, with careful management, it will be a grand success.

There is room in this direction for a second East

India Company. The products of the two mighty continents are so interchangeable—the wants of the one are so easily and naturally supplied by the productions of the other—the great highways of commerce lie so convenient and present such facilities—that my scheme, of which I have but barely hinted the outline here, is bound to become, sooner or later, an accomplished fact.

The Grange farm was an establishment of which the owner had indeed cause to be proud. One very fine sire, named *Epigram*, we saw, for which Mr. Bell had but recently paid 1500*l.* It is by *Blair Athol*, out of *Ellesmere*. The only perceptible fault that the severest critic could find about him might have been that he has rather small feet. His progeny have since fully justified the high hopes that were formed of him. The brood-mares were a noble-looking lot. They were in the pink of perfection, admirably tended, and showed all the choice qualities that the most fastidious connoisseur would desiderate. Most of them were of imported *Orlando*, *Touchstone*, and *Blair Athol* blood; whilst the colts and fillies, by *Silver Fox*, *Epigram*, *Lord of the Hills*, *Laureate*, and others, were simply perfection. Some of them, but three months' old, looked yearlings all over, and certainly finer or more promising young stock would be difficult to find.

Nor were the resources of this really fine establishment only confined to the rearing of blood and racing stock. We were shown a magnificent Suffolk horse, kept for breeding draught stock; and a pair of splendid young heifers, for which 1000*l.* were paid the other day. It may surprise our farming friends at home in the Midland counties, the Lothians, or on the Yorkshire wolds, to be told that throughout the length and

breadth of Australia there are scores of establishments perhaps in no whit inferior to the the Grange either in stock, arrangements, or management. In New South Wales the names of Lee, Loder, Eales, Dangar, Eager, Cox, Bailie, Tait, and numbers of others which at once suggest themselves, are household words; and enormous sums have been expended in purchasing strains of blood that have already raised the reputation of Australian stock of all kinds to a world-wide celebrity, and which in time bids fair to make the horses, cattle, and sheep of the Antipodes equal, if not excel, the crack specimens of Old Mother England herself.

CHAPTER IX.

Natural wealth of Australia—Neglect of agriculture—Proposals to establish experimental farms—Apathy, indolence, and ignorance prevalent—My own experiments with Indian seeds—Indian products for Australia—*Résumé* of the salient points of indigo culture—Probable result of its introduction into Australia—Mustard and rape seeds—How grown—Linseed—Sesamum—Castor plant—Hemp—Safflower—Millets—General remarks.

It is not only in the direction of stock-breeding, however, that a mighty future lies before the Australian colonies. Gifted by nature with every variety of climate, with a rich, inexhaustible soil in places, with unlimited capacity for the growth of products belonging to every land, it is marvellous that more specific and practical efforts have not been made to spread abroad a knowledge of practical farming and modern agricultural processes amongst the rising generation of colonists. It is true that there are several magnificent botanical gardens in many of the Australian towns. These are fully equal, in one or two instances, to anything of the kind we have even in Europe, so far as beauty of situation, excellence of management, and diversity of specimens are concerned. But where are our experimental farms? What are our agricultural and horticultural societies about? Horticulture indeed, owing to the self-denying, persistent effort of a few enthusiasts, is making

rapid progress, but agriculture really seems at a standstill.

Would it be believed that, although the Agricultural Society of New South Wales, the representative society of the oldest Australian colony, received a grant of a fine farm near Paramatta from government, they have seemingly never been able to utilize it, to put it to any practical use whatever, have not conducted any experiments on it, or have tried to acclimatize no new and foreign agricultural products? The farm at Paramatta lies untilled, unused, uncared for, a grim satire on the mismanagement and internal divisions of the society who ostensibly are its possessors, and a sad evidence of the little esteem in which the culture of the soil is held amongst a growing nation of centaurs, shepherds, butchers, cattle-salesmen, shopkeepers, civil servants, politicians, bankers, land-jobbers, lawyers, speculators —anything and everything but yeoman farmers and surdy tillers of the soil.

Amid all the shibboleths of parties, politics, and polemics, Speed the Plough is the one grand old rallying cry that is never heard in New South Wales. Let me identify myself with my adopted country, and speak as an Antipodean Welchman.

Considering the wonderful diversity of our climate in New South Wales, the excellence of our soil, and the rapid communication that now exists between the different parts of our great empire, it is amazing that more vigorous attempts have not been made to acclimatize some of the more important vegetable productions of other lands in which we are deficient. What has been done in this direction has mostly resulted from the efforts of private individuals, and as far as conservation of forests, irrigation, experimental gardening,

model farming, and testing the capabilities of our soil for new plants of commercial importance goes, we are far behind many newer colonies, and lag immeasurably in the rear of continental countries. In our gardens, thanks to the enterprise of seedsmen, and thanks partly to the influence of our Botanical Gardens,, to which I have referred already, we have added to the list of our ornamental shrubs and flowers. The loquat and the plantain have become domesticated, and English bushes, trees, and shrubs, as was but natural in an English-speaking colony, have been introduced successfully. There are, however, thousands of foreign plants and products that might be cultivated in this land with every prospect of a remunerative return, but our governments and agricultural societies seem to be strangely apathetic in the matter. Our farmers have no recorded results of experimental farming to guide them. They plough, sow, and garner in the old beaten track. Maize is about the only cereal foreign to English farming which is grown in any quantity, and great tracts of the most productive land in the colony, once under cultivation, are allowed to relapse into worse than fallow, because it has been found impossible, from rust, blight, and other untoward circumstances, to profitably cultivate wheat.

Some attention has been paid, in the interest of the stock-breeders principally, to the introduction and propagation of foreign grasses, but even in this direction the experiments have been halting, unmethodical, and ofttimes purposeless. Some enthusiastic agriculturists have raised their voices at times in favour of the establishment of a government model or experimental farm, which might be made entirely self-supporting, where experiments with promising foreign

seeds might be made, and the results accurately recorded; where all the most modern improvements in husbandry, and in farming processes, and machinery might be tested; and which would become a practical school for our farmers, and be productive of a manifest impetus and practical encouragement to agricultural science generally. Considering the climatic conditions we enjoy, the fecund soil we possess, and the unlimited extent of ground which could be made available for cultivation, New South Wales is about the most backward country, in an agricultural point of view, of any dependency of the Imperial Crown of Britain. Kitchen-gardening in many districts is left to Chinamen. Husbandry seems to find no favour with us as a rising nation, and the question may well be asked, What sort of a nation are we likely to become?

We cannot all be government or bank clerks, mechanics, speculators, publicans, or land-jobbers. Our wealth must be drawn from the soil, either in roots, seeds, fibres, minerals, or animal products. Already the cry is raised that there is no market for our surplus flocks and herds. It seems hopeless to compete with America in the export of meat, and the grim, ghastly *dernier ressort* of "boiling down" again seems looming in the gloomy distance. What encouragement are we giving to entice an agricultural community to rise amongst us? Practically none. The farmer is hampered with restrictions on every hand.

It is not my intent in this chapter to go into the labyrinthine subtleties and perplexities of our *land laws*, but surely it behoves all interested in the future welfare of our adopted country, all who love the grand old primal industry, that of tilling the soil, to band themselves together, and agitate for increased attention

being shown to agricultural experiment, more facilities afforded for demonstrating the principles of modern farming, and a greater recognition being given to the paramount importance of so tilling the land that it will yield its best increase, and build up a prosperous and progressive nation.

Trade and commerce ever hang on the heels of agriculture. The farmer is the true pioneer and founder of a nation's growth. For farming science we have hitherto done little or nothing. Other colonies and countries have their departments and ministers of agriculture. Meteorologists record their minute observations, measure the rainfall, classify the winds of heaven, map the variations of temperature, and collate facts, phenomena, and theories, to help the farmer to arrive at the truths which nature teaches us, and to expend his energy and skill to the best advantage in garnering the fruits of the earth. Chemists in the laboratory, by patient research and experiment, labour to aid the farmer in bringing together the substances that will the most readily assimilate in the great crucible of nature, and hasten the formation of those compounds which swell our granaries and fill our wine and oil presses. But in Sydney, as I have just stated, even our own Agricultural Society, beyond a praiseworthy attention to the improvement of stock, and the introduction of labour-saving machinery, do little or nothing to assist the practical farmer.

There are hundreds of valuable products admirably suited for our soil, climate, and natural conditions otherwise that have never been noticed at all. Had we but experimental farms, a department of agriculture, interchange of seed and products with other lands, a sympathy with farming pursuits on the part

of government, a due appreciation of the fact, that, come what may, this country must eventually stand or fall by its agriculture, must of necessity be a farming and grazing community; then we would see a more enlightened regard given to farming pursuits in the directions I have indicated, and at least a portion of the money, the price of the soil, expended in training up an agricultural body of practical farmers.

At one exhibition, held under the auspices of this National Agricultural Society, I was in many instances amazed at the ignorance displayed by good, hard-working, reputable, practical farmers when I quitted the well-worn tracks of ordinary English farming, or got away from the familiar topics of wheat, barley, potatoes, Lucerne, and Indian corn. I say nothing of the strides which sugar-growing has made, or of the narrow-minded obstructions that have often been thrown in its way; but when I came to question the Grafton, the Clarence, the Hunter River, or Shoal-haven farmers about linseed, rape-seed, saffron, vetches, millet, indigo, and other eastern products, they stared at me. Some sneered at the idea of growing anything but the good old crops that their fathers had grown before them. Others, principally the young ones, said it was a shame government did not make experiments with such crops; they themselves were too poor to experiment with crops they had never tried; they could not get seeds, and so on. And others again confessed frankly that they had never heard of such products, and had never even thought of the possibility of the land growing anything but the good old stock roots and seeds.

I consider that the government of New South Wales is deplorably short-sighted in this matter of attention

to agriculture. It is more than culpable neglect, it is suicidal folly. The expenses of experimental farms would, I feel certain, under proper management, be covered by the receipts. The model farms on the continent, and in most instances in India, are self-supporting. The good effect they have on farming, the immense practical good they achieve, the advancement and improvement they initiate and foster are incalculable. In Queensland, South Australia, and notably in New Zealand, progress is far more rapid than with us, and these colonies will doubtless reap the results of their enlightenment and enterprise, and we must see trade pass from our doors, and their markets take precedence of ours.

Shortly after I settled down in Sydney, in 1878, I got down from India, at my own expense, numerous kinds of seeds of commercial value. I made trial sowings on the grounds of Mr. D. Nichol, at Strathfield, Redmyre, near Sydney, a favourite suburban retreat, about eight miles from the coast. Although the rainfall was scanty, the soil full of iron-stone, and the influence of the sea breezes to a certain extent inimical, all the seeds I sowed germinated quickly, grew strongly and well, and, with the single exception of the indigo, gave most favourable results. In the case of the indigo, the contiguity of the sea was, in my opinion, the true cause of the partial failure, because, up on Mount Wilson, among the Blue Mountains, I afterwards found the most magnificent growth of a wild kind of indigo, and I am certain that with proper care and abundant labour, the dye could be largely manufactured in Australia.

Mr. Charles More, the talented, and in every way admirable Director of the Sydney Botanical Gardens,

took charge of the surplus seeds I got down from India, and distributed them to various parts of the country. I have received proofs from various parts that, with ordinary care, and under existing conditions, these products can be easily raised in the colony. The seeds that I tried were all sent to me from the north-west provinces of India. In climate this portion of our Indian territory is very like that of New South Wales. In summer they have fierce, hot west winds. They get the monsoons or rainy season, and they have four or five months of a cold season, during which the frosts are often as sharp as what are experienced occasionally in the colony under notice.

Indigo is largely grown in Oudh and the north-west provinces of India, although it is principally cultivated in Behar and Bengal. In this country, New South Wales, I have great hopes that it might become a valuable crop. In its early stages it is rather delicate, but once it grows to an inch or so in height, it is one of the hardiest plants known in India. It is there grown in many places almost without any preparation of the soil at all. The ground is scratched, and the seed scattered broadcast. On the sand-banks by the rivers it grows splendidly, and, owing to its bitterness, no animal will touch it. If the weeds attain any rankness the sheep are frequently driven into the indigo in Purneah, Bhaugulpore, and Jessore, to graze down the weeds, and they do not touch the indigo. I think it would grow well in Australia. It does not require much care, and it might yield three cuttings. Small vats, and all the apparatus, need not cost much, but if attempted on a large scale, if the results of the trial sowing would warrant it, I am sure it might be made a magnificent industry.

With good cultivation, careful weeding, drill sowings, and good machinery for the manufacture, indigo farming is one of the most money-making industries in the world. A succession of favourable seasons is a fortune, but in India seasons are precarious, and the price of both land and labour has been doubled if not trebled since the Mutiny; and I believe, under proper management, indigo might be made a most profitable colonial crop, and with our cheap land, use of machinery, successive cuttings, and good communications, we might successfully compete with even the cheap labour of India. For seed we would have to depend on Queensland, for the frosts here would kill the crop during the seed-time, which takes place in the cold weather. The plant is an annual, but will afford cuttings in succession for years, if not allowed to run to seed. It becomes ready for the first cutting in about four months. Sown in July, manufacturing could commence here in November. Under favouring conditions of moisture and heat, the second growth from the stumps or stubble is very rapid and luxuriant, and yields good produce. Three cuttings might be had before the cold weather again set in. A succession crop of mustard, rape, linseed, vetches, wheat, barley, or oats, millet, sesamum, or other cold weather crops, is frequently taken from the indigo lands in India. Although, as a rule, if the three cuttings be taken from the land during the year, the cultivators consider they have done well.

So far as indigo is concerned I am confident that, were it properly tried, it might become a very great industry. On the Bellinger, for instance, and the northern rivers, and in many other remote agricultural areas, where communications will for years be

difficult, the great obstacle the farmer has to contend with is the wholly disproportionate charge he has to pay on the transit of his produce to the value of the product itself. The cost of transmission to market of wheat, maize, potatoes, and similar crops, eats up all the profit, and for practical purposes he might leave farming alone. Were, however, products to be raised that could be manufactured on the farm, and transported in the manufactured instead of the crude state, transit charges would be immensely reduced; and all the oil seeds, the safflower, the dyes, and other Indian products I want to see introduced, fulfil this condition. Were a few cheap oil-mills to be established on the remote farms, were indigo vats to be built, these products would well repay cultivation, always supposing that they can be suitably grown, and to find out this experiment is necessary.

In India, where the best farming under European supervision prevails, the indigo is generally sown by drills, is carefully weeded and tended, and the fields are as well tilled as any in Strathmore or Midlothian. It would be a warm weather crop here, and might be sown about the beginning and all through August. Sown upon good moisture it would take a good start, and its growth is very rapid. In the north-west of India it is often sown broadcast upon irrigated lands. In Oudh, Bengal, and other places, it is scattered on sandbanks, in the rice-fields after the rice has been cut and the ground merely tickled with the hoe. In Bhaugulpore and Purneah the cultivators scratch the ground with their wooden ploughs, and amid the grass jungles in the newly-cleared forest lands, the hollows and margins by lakes and watercourses, its vivid green contrasts beautifully with

the arid, withered, burnt-up aspect of the surrounding country.

As already stated, it is so bitter that no animal, not even a goat, will touch it, and where the weeds, favoured by the shelter of the indigo crops, attain a dangerous rankness, the village sheep and goats are sent in to brouse down the unwanted weeds, and the field thus supplies fodder as well as a valuable crop. The plant, if it once gains a footing, is of vigorous growth. It has a deep tap-root which descends straight down. It would thus be unsuitable to stiff clays, or land with a marly or shaly bottom. I have known it successfully resist blight, caterpillars, ten months' drought, and winter frost, and on getting rain, though not a leaf had been visible before, it sprouted up with amazing vigour and quickness.

It would be ready to cut, in from three and a half to four months. In this country with occasional rains, in probably less than that time. The dye which the plant contains is extracted from the leaf. The plant is grown for leaf alone, and a thick sowing for this purpose is desirable.

The mode of manufacture, stated very shortly, is this. The plant is first steeped in steeping-vats, for about ten to twelve hours. The plant is placed in layers and battened down. When the vat is ready to open, it is run into a lower vat called the beating-vat. It runs out as a yellowish green liquor, which, on exposure to the air, becomes of an intense blue. This is due to oxygenation. Here it is now beaten violently for from two to three hours. This process is now done by machinery, a revolving wheel with small discs at the ends is put in motion by the engine, and it churns and smashes up the liquor, exposing every

particle to the action of the air, till the vat assumes a deep intense indigo blue colour, beautifully flecked with foam, and is one of the prettiest sights in all the range of the manufacturing industries of the world. Two processes go on simultaneously during the beating. The one, as I have stated, is chemical, namely oxydation, the other is mechanical, an aggregation of the particles into what is technically termed "grain." As the beating process progresses, the liquor gets seemingly filled with flecks, or starchy-looking little flakes. These get bigger and bigger, till at length the beating is completed. The *vat is ripe* and this flakey fecula, floating in the contained mass gradually subsides to the bottom as a pulpy sediment of an intensely deep blue.

The waste liquor, of a dark sherry colour, is now run off. The indigo remaining in the bottom of the vat, is strained, boiled, strained again on a large cooling table, put into presses, pressed through cloths, cut into cakes, marked, dried, and finally boxed up and sent to market. My readers will see it is a long and troublesome and costly process, but these elements are more or less inseparable from all manufacturing industries, and in indigo the results are fully commensurate with the time, trouble, and cost.

After the first cutting, the field is ploughed to loosen the soil, keep down weeds, and let the air into the roots. In a short time shoots sprout out from the stubble, and by another month or six weeks a second cutting is ready for the vats. With favourable moisture, or if the approach of cold do not check the shooting of a fresh growth, a third cutting is frequently obtainable.

In the winter, if these remaining stumps be lightly

ploughed, a crop of rape, mustard, linseed, barley, oats, or any other cereal, could be taken from the ground, and in localities where there was little frost, the "khoontees" or stubble would yield a second year's crop, and I have taken in Oudh three years' cuttings from the one sowing. As a rule, in the best indigo districts in India, annual sowings are followed. The plant from which the seed is obtained is sown at the end of the manufacturing season, and ripens in the cold weather. Indigo-growing for seed forms a very profitable industry in the northern parts of India, and immense quantities of seed are sent down to the planters in Behar and Bengal. In Queensland, therefore, we would require to have our seed-growers, and there I am desirous that seed-growing experiments should be made. There need not be costly vats and premises built, and, indeed, capitalists might here meet the requirements of the small selector and poor farmer, much in the same way as is done with the sugar-cane, and start a factory, paying the farmer for the green indigo, as is very commonly done in India. Many a cultivator in India grows his patch of indigo, and when ripe, cuts and sends it in to the factory, where it is weighed, and paid at so much per bundle.

Roughly speaking, and in the absence of all data from experiment, I would calculate the yield in this country to be fully up to the Indian yield, because the soil is virgin here, and has been worked for centuries there without ever being manured. I would imagine that an acre of good crop in this country would yield enough, from, say two cuttings, to fill six or eight vats of 2000 cubic feet each. Each vat yields on an average 30 lbs. of manufactured indigo. The average price of

this at the port of shipment, is about ten shillings per lb. It would fetch more in England or the Continent. At six vats to the acre this would yield 90*l.* per acre, with eight vats 120*l.*; this seems a large return, but, of course, until practical experiments be made, I can only state what I believe would be the case. With three cuttings in the one season, I do not think my estimate over-sanguine.

My agricultural friends in the colony will clearly understand that I am writing mainly to promote a spirit of inquiry, and a desire for intelligent experiment. It would be very easy to find out what a given weight of green indigo will yield. The question, first of all, is to find out what weight will the land bring forth; how many cuttings are procurable; and then the proportion the cost of production will bear to the value and amount of the article produced. By all means let us be sure of our ground first, and not rush blindly into foolish visionary schemes. But to sum up what I have said on indigo, we have here a plant that is of immense commercial value, which is most profitably grown in India, which is hardy, quick of growth, and does not require immoderate care, or the best soil. It is strong to resist long drought and extreme heat. Quick to recover scorching, blight, or caterpillars which sometimes attack it in its early stages. It will not succumb to slight frosts. It is unpalatable enough to enjoy immunity from even the greedy kangaroo or omnivorous goat. It is said to be a wonderful agent in destroying miasma, and lastly it needs not to be transported in bulk, but can be manufactured where it is grown, and always commands a sale, whilst it retains its "pride of place" as the only "fast" vegetable blue the world contains, and

wool-dyeing, calico-printing, potteries, and other arts and industries demand its aid.

So much for indigo. I have proved by actual experiment that it can be successfully grown in New South Wales, and I am collecting the seed which is ripening in the garden as I write, and will continue the experiment yet another year.

We come now to a class of crop which is a very common one in India, one that yields a good return, does not require a very extraordinary amount of care in its cultivation, is hardy and prolific, and which I think would be admirably suited to the climate and soil of Australia. I have, indeed, proved that it is so. I refer to the oil seeds.

Perhaps the most productive of the group is the *sarsow* or mustard, with its kindred rival the *toree* or black rape.

The mustard is the beautiful golden yellow variety, from which the mustard oil is expressed, while the brown rape yields the valuable rape oil of commerce. In India these are usually sown broadcast at the beginning of the cold weather. They could very readily be sown here, after the indigo had yielded its third cutting. A field of rape or mustard in full bloom is a very lovely sight indeed. It reminds one at a distance of the golden furze or broom of the old country. For leagues upon leagues in Bengal, Behar, Oudh, and the north-west, during the cold weather, this golden carpet is spread over the land. In January and February the richly-tinted expanse suggests poetic fancies, and reminds one of a vast "field of the cloth of gold." When it is little more than an inch or two inches in height the rape begins to put forth its blossoms. As the stalk emerges further and

further from the ground fresh successions of beautiful golden blossoms open their tiny petals, and the pods take their places on the stalk below. Innumerable tiny branchlets shoot off, each bearing its crowns of bloom and wealth of pods beneath, until at length the last little yellow petals pale and drop off, as the pod asserts itself; and then, as the stalk begins to get dry and withered, the pods swell and the seed inside begins to rattle—the weighted stalk droops its head and bends.

The natives pluck the stalks up by the roots, and gather the crop ere it be perfectly ripe. This is to let it ripen on the threshing-floor. When perfectly ripe the pods open, and were it allowed to ripen in the field much of the seed would be lost.

The stalks are not good for much beyond fuel, but the beautiful seed forms a valuable freight to Europe, and the mustard oil is used by every native in Hindostan as a relish to curry and rice, a medicament, an unguent, and in other different ways. It possesses valuable medicinal properties, is a first-rate article of diet for those who can get over the rather assertive smell, and is of course most valuable in all the uses and purposes to which vegetable oils can be applied. There is always a ready sale for the seed. The refuse makes grand feed for cattle, and every village in Bengal possesses its two or three rude oil-mills, and the taelees or oil-merchants are generally among the most intelligent and thriving class of the community.

Rape and mustard seem to thrive on any soil. Among the newly cleared tracts of the forest country, on the high bare uplands and sandy undulations of Goruckpore and North Bhaugulpore, it thrives luxuriantly. Its golden sheen covers the arid slopes of

Shahabad, and drapes the flat fertile reaches of Patna with its magnificent mantle of yellow. It is, indeed, a beautiful sight to see leagues of this gorgeous blossom.

There are three kinds: the sarsow, or large yellow rape; the toree, a smaller brown seed, not unlike turnip seed, but a little larger; and the rye, or true mustard. When in full bloom the plant is not unlike a "shot" turnip, that is, a turnip gone to seed. The seed pods form much in the same way as turnip or radish pods form. It is very productive, and as it ripens early, the natives often sow it sparsely with their barley or wheat, and pluck it just as these crops are about coming into ear. It does not require weeding, and would, I believe, make a most suitable crop for rough ground here, or newly reclaimed land, where it might not pay to grow wheat, barley, or oats.

The linseed which the natives call teesee is another favourite cold-weather crop. It is frequently sown along with the toree or barley, but most commonly is scattered over the early rice stubble, which has previously had a perfunctory scrape with a wooden plough. The linseed has an exceedingly pretty pale-blue blossom. This contrasts beautifully with the golden yellow of the toree; and at such a time, when the weather is cool and bracing, the rice crop garnered, and there are prospects of good moisture for the indigo, cane, tobacco, or maize, the Indian farmer's life is not at all an unenviable one.

There exists a large and a small kind of linseed. Its uses are too familiar to my readers to require elucidation here, but I am certain that if experiments were made on the scale I have suggested with all these oil-seeds, that on such places as the Bellinger, the

Tweed, the Richmond, Hunter, and Clarence, the finest riverine districts of New South Wales, the oil-mill would become as necessary and common an adjunct to the selector's farm as the barn and threshing-mill are to the Scotch and English farms at home.

The til or sesamum is another crop, cultivated in high sandy uplands, in many places near the Nepaulese boundary. It yields a delicious aromatic oil, which could be used in a thousand ways in the arts, but it is more of a specialty than the rape or linseed, and I daresay would not be so valuable as a farming crop.

I can scarcely estimate the yield that might be expected from these oil seeds, as all my calculations are based on the Indian figures, but from one "beegah" in Chumparum, I have raised thirty-four "maunds" of mustard seed, and this was sown amongst a field of sugar-cane which I had planted as feed for my plough bullocks. Now a "beegah" is some 1240 square yards. An acre is 4840—*ergo*, a "beegah" is somewhat more than a quarter of an acre. It will be practically near enough, allowing for better farming and a richer soil, if we say a quarter of an acre. A "maund" is eighty lbs. avoirdupois, this would make the yield of an acre, roughly, 10,880 lbs., or say ninety-six cwt. The average price in Calcutta for the seed is two rupees eight annas, to three rupees, or say five shillings to six shillings. This would make about 24*l.* an acre.

I must say that thirty-four "maunds" to a "beegah" is an exceptionally good crop; still I am sanguine that such would be no uncommon yield in the Australian colonies, and were the oil expressed, it would fetch more than the seed. The residue forms

a splendid fattening feed for stock, and the product is not bulky, but readily transportable. Linseed fetches a higher price, but for both products there is a constant and steady demand. Linseed is generally credited by the Indian farmer with being an exhaustive crop; indeed, all oil seeds seem to be more or less exhaustive, but I have never yet seen land so utterly poor as not to be capable of producing a pretty fair growth of rape. It seems to grow readily anywhere in India. On this account the natives generally sow it in their worst lands, but where it gets a rich soil, the vigour of its growth is amazing. In rich factory lands I have often seen it "laid" in the same way as rank wheat —lying in tangled masses on the humid soil, quite unable to support its wealthy weight of well-filled seed pods.

Of the castor-oil plant, what shall I say? Nearly all my readers are acquainted with the peculiar properties of the oil itself, I have little doubt. The plant grows like a weed, but with proper treatment it is capable of forming a most valuable crop. In India it is generally planted on the head ridges of the fields, or on the banks and along the sides of ditches. The women pluck the berries, or bunches of prickly-looking nuts, or pods, or whatever they are called. These are dried, husked in a mortar by a wooden pestle, and then put through the oil mill. When the bushes are freely nipped and pruned, and the plant kept down like a shrub, and not allowed to straggle, its producing power is much augmented. I do not know, however, what amount per "beegah" it would produce, as I only grew enough along the banks to yield oil for the press-house, screws, and machinery about the factory.

Sunn-sunnai, or hemp, is another common crop

with the Indian farmers. It is sown very thickly, has a large beautiful bell-shaped yellow flower, grows to a height of from six to eight feet, and each farmer grows just enough to afford him material to make his cordage for the year, and yield enough tow to put round the axles of his old patched-up bullock cart. It could, I daresay, be easily grown in Australia, and is certainly worthy of experimental trial.

Let me say a few words now of the safflower. I have already seen some very fine samples grown from the seed which I have imported from India. In India it is generally planted in rows round the edges of the poppy fields. The seeds are put in at about a foot apart. The plant is hardy, and of quick growth. The produce is contained in the flower. The safflower is not unlike a thistle-head in bloom, or perhaps an artichoke is a better illustration. When the pretty yellow flower has fully opened, the women and children, with tucked up clothes, go into the field, and pick the flowers, much as cotton is picked, and these are then spread out on bamboo mats, and put on the roof of the hut to dry.

As it dries, it assumes a deep orange hue: a deep, dark, intensely vivid orange. This is quite a feature in Indian villages. The lovely touches of colour give quite an air of beauty, which lights up the otherwise rather unlovely surroundings of the ordinary Indian hut or village, with quite an artistic and charming effect. On every thatched roof in the early mornings of February, one may see the deep crimson of the capsicums, contrasting beautifully with the brilliant orange of the koosoom, or safflower, and the snowy white of the newly washed puggree or saree spread along the lowly eaves to dry; or maybe fluttering

gaily in the wind, a party-coloured flag of quaint device erected on a high bamboo, and sacred to one or other of the multitudinous array of Hindoo mythological creations.

The dried flower is valuable. In the Indian bazaars it is sold by the ounce—and at times a rupee will only buy its own weight of the precious dye. It is used also as a drug, and I have proved it might be cultivated successfully here in patches. It would form a valuable cottage industry, but perhaps is scarcely suitable for a farming crop on a large scale.

Besides these there are Jowar, Bajra, Murrowah gennara, and a host of other kinds of grain, which form valuable food staples, and which are perfectly adapted, I am sure, for this country, i. e. New South Wales. These I have just named belong to the millet family; and, apart from their grain-producing qualifications, they are most valuable as being all of them excellent fodder plants. Indeed, the Indian gennara is, next to sugar-cane, the great stand-by of the Indigo planter for fodder to his large staff of draught cattle, which he has to keep well fed, if he wants his indigo lands kept at the proper standard of cultivation.

Then, again, there are the valuable legumes, such as the dall, mussooree, muttur, channa, lombeea, and a host of others. The channa is the well-known gram, than which there is probably no better horse-feed in the world. Surely they are all worthy of a trial! But how is the struggling farmer to try them? which brings me back to my former complaint once more.

That agriculture has not received the attention its vast importance merits is undeniable! Perhaps these few short, hurried notes may lead some of my farming Australian readers to think. If thinking will but lead

to action, and a fair trial be given to such of our Indian seeds as may seem most promising, certain I am that the available crops of the Australian farmer can be increased many-fold. Certain am I, too, that more suitable products for his soil and climate than those he now cultivates with such an often times precarious return, can be readily obtained; and that it behoves our farmers and our government to mutually aid each other to make the fecund earth yield her best and fittest increase, and make this magnificent country indeed a land of corn, and wine, and oil.

CHAPTER X.

The marsupial plague—Young of the *marsupiata* born—What is a marsupial?—Able account by a "Bush Naturalist."

ONE of the most extraordinary phenomena of Australian animal life has been the tremendous increase in numbers, during late years, of the kangaroos and other kindred marsupials, in the western interior plains of Queensland. At the period of my visit, at which we have now arrived, the evil had become one of such enormous magnitude, that the value of station property had actually deteriorated. Legislation was cried for, on the subject. The squatters were almost powerless to stem the overwhelming tide of animal life that cropped bare every leaf and vestige of grass, and in some places the "marsupial plague," as it is called, had threatened altogether to oust the sheep and cattle from the runs, and, by eating up the whole of the scanty pasture, leave nought but barren rock and worthless weeds for the subsistence of the flocks and herds. The newspapers had been full of plans, suggestions, and disquisitions on the subject, some more or less practical, others wholly visionary. Fencing-in had been tried, but was too expensive. Hunting with dogs was found quite inadequate to cope with the evil. Some contended that the destruction of natives, and the wild native dog, and the stoppage of destructive

bush fires, had done much to allow the animals to increase; but from whatever cause, the plague was becoming a gigantic evil, and threatened to interfere most seriously, if not to do away entirely, with the wool industry. On one run, for instance, in the Stanthorpe district, it was computed that there were fully 60,000 head of marsupials, and as every one of these will eat as much grass as a sheep, the magnitude of the evil can be seen at a glance. Peak Downs' station, a well-known Queensland run, had been bought by the present owner some years ago with 40,000 head of sheep, and already at the time of my visit, more than that number of marsupials, had been destroyed by the owner.

I have made various observations, and had come independently to a conclusion of my own on one of the most disputed points in connexion with the marsupial tribe. But I have found in the *Queenslander*, that admirably conducted paper, a contribution on the subject, so excellent, and written by such a master in the art of observation, that I think it best to reproduce it for the benefit of my readers. The writer signs himself "A Bush Naturalist." In connexion with the overwhelming swarms of these curious animals,—

"Now that attention generally is rivetted upon this extraordinary increase of a wild animal under the shadow of civilization, a paper on 'What is a marsupial?' may perhaps be interesting to many of those who are engaged in slaughtering them by thousands.

"The term *Marsupiata*, or *Marsupialia*, is derived from the word *marsupium*—a purse or bag—and has reference to the well-known pouch for carrying the young with which we are all so familiar in the kangaroos and opossums; but it is not so well known

that many of our marsupial animals have hardly any pouch, and some even *none at all*. In the *peramelidæ* genus (bandicoots, &c.) the open end of the pouch is, strange to say, downwards, the bag itself extending upwards, or exactly contrary to the way it is in the kangaroo, opossum, kaola, and wombat. In the *dasyuridæ* genus (native cats, *phascogale*, &c.) there is no pouch at all. These carnivorous members of the family give birth to as many as five or six young at a time, and these, when born, are as immature as those of the kangaroo, and cling on to the teats of the mother in a similar way—just as firmly, too, notwithstanding the lack of a pouch to protect them. It has always been a wonder to me, when I have killed a native cat, and seen half-a-dozen of these delicate little lumps of flesh hanging to the teats by their mouth alone, how it is that they are not killed, or at least injured, by contact with the rough ground or the branches of trees as the mother runs about and hunts for food. One thing I have noticed—that they do not carry them so long, in proportion, as the kangaroos do their young, but make a nest instead. In the *echidna* (porcupine) the pouch is represented only by a curved wrinkle of the skin; and in the *platypus* it is quite absent, as also are the nipples, the milk exuding through exceedingly minute pores of the mammary gland; and yet these very different genera are *all* marsupials, the two latter belonging to the second section of the order—the *monotremata*.

"There are several peculiarities which join together this large group of animals—a group of which Australians may well be proud, for it contains among it members whose habits are as diversified as are their forms, for some are arboreal, some terrestrial, some

aquatic, some most rapid burrowers, and others are actually aerial travellers. There are among them herbivorous species, as also are there cruel carnivora, insect-destroyers, and crab-catchers. They are a group which comprises many varieties of form quite unknown beyond our own sunny land—mysteries of anatomy, marvels of Nature's workmanship, which, when first shown to the old-world scientists, provoked a smile of incredulity as to their being real. The principal characteristic uniting all these species together is the fact that they are *non-placental*. The young of all other mammals are nourished until they attain to a large size, before being born, by having this placental connexion with the circulation of the blood of the mother, which enables the food partaken of by the mother also to nourish the young. In the *marsupiata* this placental connexion is absent, but the life-germ may be detected in the uterus in a still more immature state than is seen by the kangaroo-hunters on the nipple. There being no placenta, it is unattached, and grows by absorption, of its own accord, seed-like, *egg*-like, till born. In this respect, as well as in several others, the marsupials approach somewhat closely to the ovoviviparous creatures.

"Bushman as I am, and having killed and roughly examined some hundreds of kangaroos, &c., I of course was strongly inclined to the opinion expressed by your correspondent, Mr. M'Arthur (February 8) that the young grew out of the end of the nipple; but when I came to read how much the subject had been studied by anatomists, I found the teat theory would not hold. It is a fact that the young can be found in the first uterus, as stated above, and also that there is no possible connexion with the external uterus, or pouch.

The only point not proved is the actual passage from the one to the other. But, supposing that the young fœtus did descend the teat, or that the teat was drawn up, inverted glove-like for that purpose, it does not overcome the difficulty of how this immature little lump of flesh manages to fix itself on the *outside* of the teat, unless it has the power also to (glove-like) *turn itself* inside out; and if the creature descends the birth-teat (as some suppose), and fixes itself on to a milk-teat, the same difficulty still occurs—*i.e.*, how does it do it? Australians must remember that marsupials have been known ever since the discovery of America, and that for the last hundred years—that is, since Captain Cook's time, when the kangaroo was discovered—no animals have been more studied and examined by the anatomist and zoologist; and a bushman's crude opinion and rough external examination has no weight in opposition to the anatomical dissections of such men as John Hunter, Sir E. Horne, Geoffrey Saint Hilaire, Cuvier, De Blainville, Owen, and others. We bushmen are on the wrong track when we look into the pouch of the kangaroo in order to elucidate the mystery of the birth of their young; we must turn back and try a fresh cast—attain some considerable anatomical knowledge, and learn to dissect—then we shall find that we are travelling over old ground; that others have long since found out the way which to us is unknown. When such an authority as Professor Owen, of London—the greatest of living comparative anatomists, the most learned paleontologist of the day—pledges his word that the young kangaroo is born on its thirty-ninth day of gestation, and this from his actual daily examination of a tame doe in the Zoological Gardens in London, and also after the

anatomical dissection of the numbers that have passed through his hands, we may safely accept his conclusions. The actual transit of the little one into the pouch was *not* seen by Mr. Owen, although he examined the teat daily; it was not till the thirty-ninth day that it appeared, and it was then firmly attached to the nipple, and of a length not exceeding 1 in. and 2 lines.[1] The species was the common great kangaroo (*Macropus major*). Four days after birth, he detached the young one in order to see if it had the power of regaining the nipple, but after two days he examined the pouch and found it empty. Every portion of the litter was carefully searched, in the hopes of finding the fœtus, but without success; the mother, therefore, it was supposed, had destroyed it in consequence of the disturbance.[2]

"In the *Zoological Journal*, vol. v., p. 239, an instance is given of a young fœtus which was only a degree larger than the one detached by Professor Owen, for it was 'only the size of the last and half the middle joint of one's little finger; its integuments of a flesh-colour, and so transparent as to permit the higher-coloured vessels and viscera to shine through them.' This minute specimen, although it made no effort to regain the teat when held close to it, yet in two hours' time after it had been experimentally detached had regained it and was as well as before. In the 'Transactions of the Linnæan Society,' vol. xvi., is mention of a similar experiment on a fœtus the size of a rat; and this also, after two hours' separation, had regained its hold, and was none the worse.

[1] "Philosophical Transactions," part ii, 1834.

[2] "Naturalist's Library," vol. x.

"Among scientific anatomists there is *no doubt* as to the mode of birth of the young marsupial (except of the *monotremata*), the only query being as to how this feeble lump of delicate flesh manages to attach itself so firmly by the mouth to the nipple of the dam. I would ask your correspondent, Mr. M'Arthur, whether, in the case of the carnivorous marsupials (*dasyuridæ*) which I have, as before stated, found with six young, each hanging to its own nipple, if he supposes *all* these nipples are inverted at the time of conception, and that each receives its individual germ? Without being an anatomist, it is evident to any one that in the case of the *anterior* nipples this could not possibly be the case. It is supposed that the mother takes up the little one in her lips and places it in the pouch.

"'Microzoon,' the scientific contributor to the *Australasian*, in 1869 (I think) stated that 'several of both the American and the Australian marsupials have been watched at the time of parturition, and there can be no doubt of the young being brought forth in the ordinary way of other mammals, taken up by the lips of the mother, and fixed in this way upon the teat; in the case of the kangaroos, the female has been seen often holding open the aperture of the pouch, and, plunging the head to the bottom of it, replacing the young which had been experimentally detached.' My own impression is that the nipple is capable of a certain degree of erectile rigidity (no uncommon thing in *mammæ*), and so the animal is enabled to pierce the tender mouth of the fœtus as held to it by the lips of the mother. Against this theory of removal by the lips we must place the peculiarities of the *echidna* (porcupine). On this subject Mr. Krefft, late curator

of the Sydney Museum, says, 'The manner in which the young (*echidna*) is brought forth and deposited in one of the two small cavities or pouches on the abdomen, which are destitute of nipples, is a wonder to me. In the case of the kangaroo, or even of the clumsy wombat, the lips may convey the new-born young to the teat; but here is an animal without lips, and with the stiffest of great unwieldy claws, and yet it has the means of housing its young, which are about the size of a large tick, securely in its abdominal receptacle, where nothing secures it but its own great claws; even in so young a creature, these are already powerfully developed.' As there are no nipples in the *echidna*, what becomes of the inverted-nipple theory in their case? 'Botanist,' in the *Queenslander*, says that his black boys say that the *echidna* lays white eggs, and the *platypus* black ones. Perhaps they do, and the young, when they emerge from the egg, if the mother is at that time lying on the egg, are thus enabled at once to cling to the abdomen. I believe it is still an open question as to whether these monotremes are oviparous, or bring forth the living young. What are our lynx-eyed Australian youth about that, although the country has been settled for a hundred years, they have not found out all about the young of the *echidna* and *platypus*?

The next peculiarity, which is a most constant characteristic of a marsupial, is the presence of the marsupial bones. These are two bony pieces extending one on each side, upwards and outwards from the pubis, where they converge, and to which they are joined. These bones are common to both sexes, and only absent, I believe, in one species—the *thylacinus*, or tiger-wolf, of Tasmania. Professor Owen says that

both sexes of the marsupial genera in various ways[3] manifest their affinity to the oviparous classes, and also that 'the marsupial bones so common in the skeletons of reptiles are limited in the mammiferous class to this division, in which alone, from the peculiarly brief period of uterine gestation and the consequent non-enlargement of the abdomen, their presence might be expected. But these bones serve important purposes in relation to the generative economy of the *marsupiata*. In the female they assist in producing a compression of the mammary gland necessary for the alimentation of a peculiarly feeble offspring, and they defend the abdominal viscera from the pressure of the young as these increase in size during their mammary or marsupial existence, and still more so when they happen to return to the pouch for shelter.'[4] The author (Professor Owen) next proceeds to point out the uses of these bones in the males, which have peculiarities corresponding to the pouch in the female—'*ad characteres suprà dictos addantur in maribus situs testium ante penem, et in feminis vagina in duas canales septo divisa.*'[5] These bones are also to be found in the subdivision *monotremata*. The young marsupial has not, when very young, the power to suck; the milk is ejected by the mother.

"Another distinguishing characteristic of a marsupial is one on which scientific anatomists lay great stress, but which to me, I confess, seems unimportant, for no use can be found for it; it is the celebrated 'inflected angle of the lower jaw.' I will quote from Krefft to explain this technical phrase: 'Let me explain my

[3] "Proceedings of Zoological Society," 1838.
[4] "Philosophical Transactions," 1834.
[5] "Naturalist's Library," vol. x.

words to those who may have the jaw of an opossum or wallaby at hand. The flat process rising up just from behind the last tooth is called the "ascending ramus." This bone dips down again and then expands to the right and left, producing the "condyle," which works against the skull and causes the jaws to move. At the inside base of this condyle the jaw or mandible enlarges, spoonlike, forming in kangaroos, phalangers (opossums), and wombats a deep hollow, and in the carnivorous tribes a hooked process, well turned in. In the *kaola* (native bear) this piece of bone is reduced to a notch, which is very slightly bent inwards at the tip only.' As the *monotremata* (*echidna* and *platypus*) are the only exception to this law, the characteristic is a good and very strange distinguishing point as applied to our existing marsupials; but I remember reading somewhere that in some of our gigantic fossil marsupials it is not to be observed. So exclusively is this trifling variation a feature of 'what constitutes a marsupial' that in only one other mammal in the whole world—the Madagascar centetee—is it to be found.[6] Another remarkable peculiarity of a marsupial is the permanent separation of the bones of the skull; they do not anchylose in the adult and old individual, as do most of the bones of the skull in placental animals.[7] By this peculiarity our Australian animals show their alliance with the reptilia, among whom this separation is the common rule.

"In undertaking to write as to what constitutes a marsupial it is necessary that I should refer to yet another peculiarity, which, I must own, is a little beyond my own or the ordinary bushman's technical

[6] "Microzoon" in the *Australasian*.

[7] Owen's "Osteology of the Marsupials."

knowledge, but which, for the sake of the more anatomically learned among the *Queenslander's* many readers, I must not leave out, or my paper would be incomplete. I will quote from 'Waterhouse's Marsupials:' 'Agreeably to this view connected with the ovoviviparous generation of the *marsupiata*, and with an inferiority of intelligence which Professor Owen observed in these animals in confinement, he was induced to undertake a careful examination of the brain in the various marsupials, and the result was a most interesting discovery. Besides the decreased size of the hemispheres of the brain, and consequent exposure of the cerebellum, indicative of a low grade of organization, the *corpus callosum* and *septum lucidum* were found to be entirely wanting in these animals, or at least existing in only a rudimentary state. Now the *corpus callosum*, which is the principal bond of union between the opposite hemispheres of the brain, had been regarded as the great characteristic of the brain in the mammalia, and in fact this commissural apparatus presents the *essential difference* which exists between that and the oviparous vertebrate classes.'

"The reader who takes interest enough in this subject to have followed me will now begin to see 'what constitutes a marsupial,' and to find, notwithstanding the name, that the pouch has very little to do with it. First, there is the chief peculiarity—their being non-placental; then there are those curious marsupial bones; then there is the apparently useless, but nevertheless invariably found, inflected angle of the lower jawbone; then there is the divided state of the bones of the skull; then the small brain and the want of the *corpus callosum* and the *septum lucidum*. The observant reader will also see that in many respects the order approach

nearly to an alliance with the reptiles, and to the egg-laying *vertebrata*—an alliance which, in the division *monotremata*, is still more clearly to be traced. Many naturalists have wished to break up the order, distributing them among the other mammals according to their teeth, toes, opposable thumbs, &c.; but the clever anatomical investigations of Professor Owen discovered in how many curious ways the whole group agreed—carnivorous as well as herbivorous, aerial as well as aquatic, American and Australian representatives; and they are now admitted to be a distinct grand division of Nature, as are the mammalia, the birds, or the reptiles." [8]

[8] I have also quoted from various publications of Krefft (Sydney); from "Waterhouse's Marsupials;" and "Microzoon," in the *Australasian*, to whom I am indebted for my text, "What is a Marsupial?"

CHAPTER XI.

A kangaroo battue—Mr. Bracker of Warroo—The Darling Downs—Warwick and Stanthorpe—Varieties of marsupials—Pikedale Station—The scene of operations—The line—The beaters—Old wombat—The beat—Fierce excitement—Incidents of the sport—A Spartan meal—Camping out—A monster bag—Waste of skins—How these might be utilized—A letter from the *Globe* on the subject—Pikedale Wash Pool—Tin mining—The present and future of Queensland.

If my readers have attentively perused the foregoing lucid description, by a Bush Naturalist, he will now have a pretty good idea of the natural history of the kangaroo, and I may resume the thread of my personal experiences. Mr. Harry Bracker of Warroo, my genial host, seeing an account of one of our Indian battues after deer, had determined to give the battue system a trial. Let me try to picture to you a kangaroo battue as I saw and participated in it. He organized a mob of beaters, black and white, and these, mounted on active horses that climb like cats, and are as sure-footed as the ibex, scour the creeks, gullies, ridges, and slopes, and driving on the multitudes of kangaroos in a semi-circle before them, the animals are forced on to a line of shooters posted behind trees at intervals of from 80 to 100 yards. Every advantage is taken of the formation of the ground, the direction of the wind, &c. The battue, when I joined the

party, had been going on for about six weeks. There had been on an average from twelve to fourteen guns at work daily, and the astounding total of 16,000 odd of these destructive and useless animals had been bagged; indeed, had the very young ones and badly wounded been counted the total would certainly have exceeded 20,000. The battue was a grand success, the excitement intense; the sport of its kind most excellent.

Hearing that all sportsmen were made heartily welcome, and having been asked to visit the district by several influential run-holders, I made a start from Brisbane on Monday, and taking rail for Warwick, the principal town in the Darling Downs district, I arrived there on the same day. The Downs proper are broad, undulating, grass-covered steppes; the soil rich, black, and admirably suited for agricultural purposes. This land to a certain extent has been taken up by free selectors, and is no doubt destined to become a vast grain-producing district.

The train up to Toowoomba passed over some very steep gradients and winding curves. The great dividing range lies spread out before us as we sweep along; range behind range, tier above tier of densely wooded hills; every peak a mass of verdure, all of a uniform sombre tint. The stillness is unbroken by cry of bird or beast. There is no glinting of stream or flashing of waterfall. Deep gullies, dried-up creeks, and bold crags and precipices there are in plenty; but, except in some gloomy stagnant pool, far in the depths of the pathless bush, there is no water. I can realize now what an awful thing it must be to be "lost in the bush." There had been a severe drought here for months, and anything more arid, withered, and utterly

desolate could scarcely be conceived than the rocky slopes and the ridges about.

From Warwick to Stanthorpe, the seat of a growing tin-mining industry, I went by Cobb's coach. This is a truly colonial institution. The track winds in and out among stumps, boulders, and fallen trees. There are two horses on the pole and a leader. The eye and nerve of the driver are marvellous. We go at a furious pace, and every moment you expect to be dashed against a tree, hurled over a stump, or smashed against a boulder. Your heart is in your mouth at every turn; but the practised skill of the driver surmounts every obstacle, steers you clear of every danger, and as you career swiftly along you get quite exhilarated with the glorious air and rapid pace, and soon become accustomed to the dangers and impediments that beset every yard of the way.

Of marsupials there are many varieties. The "old man" is the old grizzly veteran of a hundred fights. He is generally of a ruddy brown or a grizzled grey colour, and with his powerful hind claw can rip up a dog or a horse, and is a dangerous customer at close quarters. The kangaroos are smaller; the females are called "Mammies" and the young ones in the pouch "Joeys." The colour of the "wallaroos" is a beautiful sable black, and they inhabit the stony ridges. The "wallabies" have pretty, gentle-looking heads, and are of all colours, ranging from pure white "albinos," creamy, lavender, grey, and red, to dark grey. The "flyers" are generally a light grey; they hop along at a tremendous pace, and are very difficult shooting. Paddy-melons, bandicoots, and rats are all smaller, and are less frequently met with in the interior than nearer the coast.

But hold! we have not yet reached the scene of operations. Leaving Stanthorpe I was lucky enough to get a lift in a returning buggy, and started off at once for Pikedale, camped out for the night, and in the morning shot my first wallaroo with ball, an achievement of which I was very proud.

I received a most hospitable reception at Pikedale, and, after spending the night there, started with an obliging guide for the scene of the great battue, the now famous Warroo run. We carried our guns with us. After several hours' sharp riding through the bush, we heard sounds to our right resembling the report of distant pistol-shots. Our nags pricked up their ears, and now came wafted on the wind the confused echoes of the shouting of the beaters.

We hurried off to the right, across a dried-up creek, then straight up a sheer mountain side, where the rocks stood up "rugged and stern," paused a moment on the top to admire the wonderful panorama of abrupt crag and wooded mountain stretching all around—a vast amphitheatre of forest-clad hill and dell—and, joining the line of dusky beaters, slowly descended into the basin below, driving an excited mob of bounding kangaroos and wallaroos before us. Occasionally a scared animal would try to break back, or to outflank the line; then the beater on his active horse—one that could climb like a goat and gallop like a demon—would set off in pursuit, yelling like a fiend, his long whip waking the echoes in the wooded glen, and making the vaulted arcades of the forest ring again. From the valley below a shot was now heard, followed at intervals by another, then by twos and threes. From our elevation we could see the position of the whole line. Tiny wreaths of smoke curled upwards

among the swaying branches, dusky forms went hopping about along the line, here in groups and clusters, and there in a long extended line of dingy lavender and grey.

Now the whole valley reverberates, as the firing waxes hot; the air is filled with sound, the thump, thump of the bounding game is distinctly heard, and amid shrieks, yells, cries, cracking of whips, and an incessant rattle of musketry, as volley after volley is poured into the advancing line of animals, the beat culminates, and the excitement reaches its height. Soon, however, the noise and bustle die away, and naught is again heard but the talk and laughter of the men, as beaters and shooters mix together and discuss the incidents of the sport. There were about ten beaters, several of whom were half-castes, one or two were station hands, and the others aborigines.

How their white teeth shone, and their gleaming eyeballs sparkled with mirth and excitement! The shooters were twelve in number, and reminded me of the descriptions of the backwoodsmen and forest rangers in Captain Mayne Reid's novels. Their hats and other habiliments were evidently intended more for use than ornament. Yet they were a jovial manly-looking set of men, and the utmost good feeling seemed to prevail among the party.

My obliging guide now introduced me to my host—a fine, tall, ruddy specimen of the genus squatter; and from him I received a hearty welcome, and, squatting down by a clear-looking water-hole in the rocky gully, while the fires flickered and smoked all round us, we discussed a lunch of beef and damper, washed down with draughts of very welcome tea, and then my ammunition was served out to me, my

bullets that I had carried so far being discarded as too dangerous for the beaters, and, indeed, at such a mark as the bounding marsupial one would need to have the skill of Hawkeye himself to hit the game with ball.

Old General Wombat, the director-in-chief of the beaters, was a character in very deed. Paralyzed in the lower extremities, he had the strength of a practised athlete in his arms. To see him slouching along in a constrained sitting attitude made one pity him. Reaching his horse, however, he seizes the stirrup with his bony hand. By sheer force he pulls himself up to the saddle, and once seated there old Wombat is at home. With one foot in the short stirrup, and the other doubled up under him on the saddle, he careers along; cares for no impediment; dashes down the rockiest incline or through the densest scrub with the same reckless disregard of danger; and his red handkerchief bound round his grizzled locks, his eyes gleaming with excitement, and his hoarse shouting filling the air, he looks no unapt representation of a forest gnome, or demon rider of the Hartz or Brocken. The beaters, led by this old veteran, scour the gullies, and creeks, and slopes, shouting and cracking their whips, and driving all the game before them. A stock-rider is posted at each flank to keep the boys in hand. Their riding is superb. I had often heard wonderful stories of bush-riding, but no description could come up to the reality. Our troop, if not romantic, was picturesque enough. Riding along in line, over fallen wood and across dried-up creeks, each with his slouched hat, his bag of cartridges, and polished gleaming gun, and the various impedimenta of camping life hanging from the saddle, we looked like a band of guerilla troopers out on an expedition.

The knowledge of the country displayed by the men astonished me. Our host, in giving directions for the beat, seemed to know every yard of the ground for miles. A broken branch, a pile of stones, a peculiar tree, a gully, a gap, a water-hole—were all to him so many familiar landmarks, and seemed to be equally well known to all the men. We have ridden at a hand-gallop sometimes for miles across the most intricate country, through gap and gorge, over crag and peak, down dingle and dell, and at the end of our long ride, and still longer wait, the line of beaters has come across our position as true as if they had had us in sight all the time.

When I joined the party the men had all been at the work daily for weeks, consequently every man knew his place and duty; each man's eye was "in," very few shots were wasted, no delays or hitches occurred, and without all were merry and good-humoured, and from first to last seemed imbued with that spirit of hearty goodwill and *camaraderie* which field-sports generally evoke. A healthy rivalry there was, of course, but all were good-natured, considerate to each other, unselfish, and unaffectedly anxious to promote good sport and successful shooting. You would scarcely imagine the excitement that attends the sport. When we have all been put in our places, there is often a long wait till the beaters come up. Some recline at full length in the shadow of their tree; others study the pages of the *Queenslander*, or other newspaper; not a few dip deep into pages of some sensational novel; but generally ample time is afforded to make all necessary arrangements. The silence is almost depressing. Occasionally your horse behind the line kicks up the gravel, or a stray shot at some solitary kangaroo,

unconscious of your proximity, breaks the stillness for a moment; but, as a rule, the utmost quiet prevails. There is no distant

"Boom of waterfall, far in the forest land."

No cheerful chirruping of birds; no lowing of the kine; nought is heard but the low sighing of the gentle breeze among the gum-trees. A flock of magpies or parrots may dart past, or a silent little bird flit rapidly by; but otherwise no sight or sound of animated life breaks on the eye or ear. You watch the myriads of insects hurrying over the dried-up soil; the grass and wild flowers drooping under the drought and heat; the gnarled trunks of the iron-bark; the pointed leaves of the wattle and cherry scrub, and white glistening boles of the gum-trees begin to assume strange, fantastic shapes. You are hovering on the confines of dreamland, when lo! the first faint crack of the distant whip, the first faint, far distant halloo. The sound electrifies you. You grasp your gun, strain your ear to catch the slightest sound, and eagerly peer forth to see if the expected victims are approaching.

The sounds slowly and gradually draw nearer. Then an "old man," a veritable tough old bounding brigand, jumps slowly past you, along the ridge, just keeping beyond range. After him comes a black old wallaroo. He is coming right up to you, when your next hand neighbour, with his far-reaching gun, levels the deadly hail, and over rolls the "wallaroo," taken from your very teeth. Now they appear in twos and threes over the ridge. You have ample time to watch their every motion; they cock their ears for the sounds of the beaters behind, leisurely lick their fore-paws,

nibble at a tuft of grass, and then jump on a few paces further. Crack goes the gun to your right! Over topples a "flyer;" the rest hop about in truly comical bewilderment. One comes your way. Bang goes your piece, and you score your first kangaroo. The rest, now fairly frightened, bound along, and the guns go bang, bang, down the line, as each shooter gets his chance. The firing in front has alarmed the advancing mob. Not for long, however. On comes the howling line of beaters like the remorseless march of fate. On right and left burst forth the jets of flame. The ground is dotted with dead and dying. You are warming to your work. You have yet time to watch your neighbours' shooting. Individual incidents have yet time to catch the eye; but *now* the beaters are nearing the crest of the ridge, and, like an advancing flood, the tide of kangaroos flows swiftly on you. You cannot fire fast enough. Before, behind, on every side, the bounding forms go swiftly past. All is noise, bustle, mad excitement. No time now to watch your neighbour. On they come faster and faster. Your blood is fairly up, and for once in your life you feel the fierce, unconstrained delight of the successful hunter.

Of course there are many who, like Gallio, "care for none of these things," but sportsmen will understand me. The sport is decidedly better than partridge or pheasant shooting, is in its way equal to a drive after black buck or hog-deer, and the man must have a sluggard's blood indeed who does not warm up into a genuine burst of excitement as a kangaroo beat reaches its culminating moment, and every effort is all too weak to stop the torrent of bounding game that passes before you.

Let me again describe one glorious day. When our line is formed, we have generally a good long time to wait for the advent of the beaters. The horses are tied up to trees in rear of the line, and an occasional movement may be heard from their neighbourhood. A magpie or flock of crimson-breasted parrots may dart rapidly past; a few small birds twitter and hop about; otherwise, no sound disturbs the oppressive silence. The men recline against their tree, with hat cocked over their eyes or book in hand. You can even detect the sound when a match is struck, as some inveterate smoker, tired of inaction, takes refuge in the soothing weed.

Suddenly you hear a faint, subued "thump, thump." A solitary "old man" kangaroo, all unconscious of danger, is approaching you at a steady pace. The echoes of the rocky gully ring again as you discharge your piece, and your first kangaroo topples over before you, scattering the stones dried sticks and leaves in his death agony. Far to the right another shot echoes back your own. Every one is now on the alert. Shots ring out at intervals. On the slope before you, and along the crest of the ridge, you see numbers of marsupials, in groups, in clusters, and in dusky lines, hopping about in utter and comical bewilderment. The cries and shouts of the beaters, the cracking of the stock-whips, and thunder of the horses' hoofs now come to your ears carried by the wind over the ridge. There is a rush of frightened animals past. You are too excited to take steady aim, but blaze away and have the mortification of missing. Better luck next time. You load as fast as you can.

On come the lines of bounding kangaroos without cessation. You are now fairly warming to your work;

you are getting your eye in. You glance at your neighbour; you fire to right, left—in front, and behind, as some terrified "flyer" breaks the line. Occasionally a sharp patter of shot against your tree, or overhead, cutting off twigs and leaves, reminds you for a moment that your neighbour is not very mindful of his line of fire, and that the element of danger is not wanting to the sport.

The beaters are now plainly visible, dashing hither and thither with shouts and frantic gestures, as the quarry try to break back. On comes another rush of black "wallaroos" and "wallabies." The firing is incessant. It is intensely exciting; shoulders and arms are tired and at length you are almost glad to see the last terrified kangaroo go bounding madly over the ridge behind you.

The ripple of conversation, chaff and jollity now breaks out afresh, and each vies with the other in making up for his enforced silence during the beat. We proceed to cut off the ears of the slain, remount our horses, and converge together, when the ears are counted, slit up and thrown away; and then on again, at a rattling hand-gallop, over gully and creek, through grassy bottom and down stony steep, till we are placed again for the next beat.

At midday we camp beside some "water-hole" for lunch, or dinner, as it is called. Each man has his "billy" and pint pot. Each carries his bit of damper, salt beef, and supply of tea and sugar. Some of the more luxurious cut off a gory tail, scorch it on the fire, scrape off the singed fur and cuticle, and then munch their smoking delicacy with great apparent relish. The blacks raise peels of joyous laughter. The fires crackle and flame, and the smoke half blinds you.

Dirty hands, smirched faces, and old clothes are the prominent features. There is no cool Bass, no popping of corks, no tinned provisions. It is a Spartan meal. But our appetites are good, as is our digestion; and, united in the common brotherhood of sport, we enjoy our meal and each other's company.

Camping out at night with a blanket over, and green leaves under you, with your saddle for your pillow and the sighing of a myriad of leafy tongues for your lullaby, is not to be commended for rheumatism; but the sport was excellent, the whole experience novel and interesting, and I never enjoyed myself better. The blow-flies are an awful pest; they fairly routed us from our camp more than once. There are not many snakes, but the ants are legion, and their bite is not to be despised.

Altogether this novel experience, even after my old adventures in Purneah and Oudh, I found most enjoyable. Let no one say, then, that there is not good shooting in Australia. Here is real sport within reach of all, and with such opportunities within his grasp, that shooter's soul must be an ignoble one indeed who would prefer the pigeon-trap to the glorious freedom of the interminable bush—the real rivalry of kindred spirits, and the bold free-shooting and steady nerve and skill required to shoot the bounding kangaroo.

The average number of beats per diem varied from four to six, but four drives daily was about the regular thing. There were about fourteen guns on an average all through the meet, the number killed per gun being six, and the average number of slain eighty-five per beat. This gives an average of just 340 head of game daily, taking bad with good days.

To give some idea of the vast numbers of the animals, and the rapidity of the firing, I may mention that on one occasion in February the astounding number of 547 were shot in one day, and of these 440 were shot after lunch. The biggest beat of 288 occurred that afternoon, just as the sun was setting, and the firing did not last more than twenty-five minutes at the very utmost. Had the sun but stayed above the horizon another ten minutes, probably another couple of hundred might have been shot. From the descriptions the men have given me, the scene must have been one of unparalleled excitement. There were only twelve guns, and some had to knock off from the barrels getting heated, and from lack of ammunition. The hottest corner after partridge or pheasant would find this hard to beat. Other two beats totalled 250 and 235.

The animals became, of course, more wary as time went on, but this was counterbalanced by the increased accuracy of the shooters. For myself, I can only say that a more delightful week I have never spent, and better company or better sport I never wish to have.

I was surprised to find the skins held in such little esteem. Several I procured from the men, had been beautifully cured, and they made really handsome rugs and wraps. Had the process of curing them been followed out methodically, and on a mercantile basis, I feel certain a valuable industry might have been inaugurated, and much waste prevented. One element against any such attempt would be the excessive cost of carriage. Labour, too, is terribly dear, and the country difficult and rugged. Still, I think, men might have been employed to skin the fallen animals, and the peltries, roughly cured, might have

been sent to Warwick or other towns, where an experimental tannery would surely have found constant and remunerative employment. This is not the only instance, however, I have witnessed in the Antipodes of deplorable waste, and seeming want of all appreciation of valuable natural products. In fact labourers were too scarce, and found plenty of other more remunerative work, and the extermination of the marsupials was too pressing a necessity to let considerations of the value of their skins stand in the way of their destruction. So hundreds of thousands have been wasted, that under more favourable circumstances might have given employment to capital and labour; and from the worthless carcasses of the bounding brigands have evolved a source of profit, which indeed may yet receive attention at the hands of some enterprising pioneer of industry, and secure him a fair return for his outlay.[1]

[1] Shortly after I had written the above, I came across a paragraph taken from the *Globe* newspaper, which, as it bears out my remarks, I here reproduce, and commend the hint to my sporting friends in the back valleys and timbered ridges, where so many thousands of the wallaby and kangaroo are even now being shot down in myriads, and allowed to rot and go to absolute waste:—"The present crusade against the marsupials, which is being carried on with so much vigour in the Australian colonies, affords an opportunity, which the colonists seem rather disposed to throw away, of making a profit out of the enemy, which, under ordinary circumstances, they have not hitherto been able to do to any great extent. The skins of the kangaroo and wallabies, which are now being slain at the rate of many thousands a week in Queensland alone, afford an excellent material for making leather, while, dressed with the fur on, they make useful carriage or railway rugs and other similar articles. Indeed, a very considerable trade has long been carried on in wallaby, kangaroo, and opossum skins, and as long ago as 1849 as many as 12,000 kangaroo skins were exported from Western Australia alone, and the number of pelts now imported into this country from Australia amount to many hun-

At Pikedale I visited the Wash pool. It is a magnificent deep rippling pool, situated under a rocky cliff, with a rich small "flat" on the near side. Here are the engines, the circular yards for the sheep, and the various huts and buildings. The water is forced up by a strong centrifugal pump into a high sluice. There are numerous shoots, all holding a 12-foot depth of water. The sheep are made to pass through a bath of soap and water before they are put under the "rush." When they reach the *rush tank* the valve is

dreds of thousands. Before the late invasion by the marsupials of the settled districts induced the settlers to wage a war of extermination against the 'hoppers and jumpers,' the trade was gradually increasing in importance, and one firm in Melbourne alone exported over half a million kangaroo skins in a year to friends in London, who offered to take a million at a slightly reduced price. Unfortunately, however, the skins which are now sent to market are so carelessly removed from the animals, and packed in so dirty a condition, that they are often valueless, and thus, instead of making the most of their opportunity, the kangaroo-hunters are both spoiling the market and doing their best to exterminate the race of kangaroos. Many thousands are killed without the trouble being taken to skin them. This is a great and irremediable mistake. Skins, if properly dressed, are easily preserved, and there need be no fear of glutting the market, since the extraordinary harvest now being reaped might be held back and offered for sale gradually in after-years; the expense of storing and the amount of capital allowed to be idle for a time would be repaid with interest as the ordinary supply of skins falls off, as it must do, in a year or two. Not only are the skins available for the manufacture of the best and most durable leather, as well as for use as "furs," but the thinner pelts make excellent gloves, and might also be used in bookbinding, covering furniture, and for other similar purposes. It is grievous therefore to hear of thousands and thousands of valuable skins being wastefully destroyed; and even in the most thinly-populated districts of Queensland it would be worth while to establish tanneries for the purpose of receiving the skins of the slaughtered beasts. The tails alone of the kangaroo, properly prepared as soup and preserved in tins, would form a large item of profit."

opened, and down comes the accumulated body of water, and the sheep are thoroughly soaped and cleaned. They are then led up an inclined slope, strewn with pebbles and clean grass, into a yard similarly floored. Here they drip and dry. The pebbles raise no dust, so the fleece catches up no fresh impurity. The owner can wash over 5000 per diem. The shearing shed is fitted up with every modern improvement, but has been so often described that it might not interest the reader.

Stanthorpe is the focus of the tin-mining interest. When the metal was first discovered there was a tremendous rush to the locality. The tin was found in large quantities in the beds of the streams and gullies round the neighbourhood. It was as bad as the gold fever. Huts, shanties, hotels, erections of all sorts started up as if by magic, and Quart Pot Creek (the euphonious designation of the stream) woke up one morning to find a bustling town upon its banks. The surface-digging is now nearly played out, but several shafts have been sunk; and an active, and to all appearance permanent industry has been formed. The drags upon the road, with their heavy load of bags of tin, each load drawn by teams of ten and twelve horses, two and two abreast, are a fine sight. The horse being faster and more tractable than his patient cousin; the bullock, has usurped his place, and not nearly so many bullock drays are now seen as formerly. The drays are finely built, strong but light —and are, I believe, an American notion.

Altogether my trip to the Downs was a most enjoyable excursion. Without entering here into the land question, there is no doubt that vast areas up in this, and similar parts of the country, can never be fit for

anything but pasture. Copper, antimony, tin, lead, and silver, there are indubitably in great quantities, and they may eventually be worked. The squatters are fine gentlemanly fellows—up to any amount of rough work, but not unmindful also of the refinements of life. Their hospitality is boundless. They have many difficulties to contend with. No doubt the great aim of the colony is to induce a productive population to settle, but due regard should be taken to the conservation of the squatter's rights and interests. Here, however, as I have noticed everywhere, party feeling, local interests, class jealousies, and bitter political hostility meet you on every side. It is next to impossible to have a calm, temperate discussion on any matter. The settlers are too much jostled and elbowed by every one around to think of the future. The want of the moment must be satisfied; let the future take care of itself.

Nevertheless, so far as material resources and natural gifts are concerned, Queensland is a noble colony. Her political and social life have drawbacks undoubtedly, which, on the whole, it is better that a stranger should let alone, they will come right in time. The marble block is in the rough at present; it only wants the care, the skill, the time, and the hand of capable workers, to fashion it into a magnificent form that will be a triumph to all time.

CHAPTER XII.

Sydney—Her magnificent harbour—Its unrivalled beauties—The city—General charge of dirtiness—Not so bad as it is generally painted—Comparison of Sydney with other towns—Sydney for her age a wonderful city—Rapid extension—General aspect of the city—The suburbs—Suburban villas—Sydney freestone—Small allotments and undue sub-division of land—Absence of cottage gardens—Want of sanitation—The term "Cornstalk"—Sydney streets—Public buildings—Causes of her chronic indebtedness—Unfitness of her aldermen—Testimony of one of their number—Summary.

My next place of sojourn after quitting Queensland was Sydney—who has not heard of Sydney, with its famous harbour? What schoolboy knows not the strange, romantic history of Captain Cook, and the beautiful inlet he discovered and christened Botany Bay? What strange associations are connected with the early history of this wonderful settlement! What an eventful wealth of incident has gathered round the city in its hundred years or less of existence! Many points in the historical retrospect might well be shrouded in oblivion. The wrecked hopes, the bad passions, the stupid political blunders, the sad memory of brutalities, failures, cruelties, and crimes, all fade quite away in presence of the majestic beauty with which bountiful nature has surrounded the city. The eternal barriers of rock still frown over the everheaving sea, that lashes itself into fury on their adamantine fronts as sternly

as they did myriads of years ago. The sun reflects back the glory of his beams from countless inlets of placid loveliness; and the marvellous beauty of the harbour is so perfect that even all the prosaic, oft-times disfiguring evidences of man's presence, the pollution of the city's drainage, the frowning batteries, lowbrowed mounds that mark torpedo-firing stations, smoke of steam-ships and factories, and all the uglinesses of our utilitarian age of coal, iron, smoke, and steam, are powerless to dim the lustre of the majestic profusion of beauty which is here presented on every hand.

In the broad and noble reaches of this truly magnificent bay the navies of the world might ride at ease. To explore the intricacies of every successive opening, and appraise the beauties of the countless nooks and windings, each more beautiful than the other, would be the task of many summers of holidays.

It is no wonder that the first question asked of the stranger or visitor by the Sydney native is,—what do you think of the harbour? Yet the first impression, I must confess, a little disappointed me. I expected the vegetation would have been more luxuriant; the scenery bolder and more wild. There is little or no cultivation about the shores of the harbour. There are, barring the bold frowning "Heads" at the entrance, no rocky pinnacles, sharp peaks, or towering crags. The hills all around are gently swelling knolls, clothed with the dull sombre verdure of the Australian bush. The scenery is not so vividly green as Point de Galle, Ceylon, nor so strikingly picturesque and varied, perhaps, as Oban, or some other of the bays and harbours on the west coast of Scotland. As you steam up the harbour, however, opening after opening

breaks upon your view. The water is flashing beneath the rays of a semi-tropical sun; huge masses of the freestone, so characteristic of the city, skirt the water's edge; the thick scrub covers every eminence and undulation; fantastically-shaped islands are crowned with Norfolk pine, gum-trees, and undergrowth, but all of a uniform, sombre tint. The entrance to Wooloomaloo Bay is magnificent. McQuade's Point and Garden Island are perfect gems of living verdure; the Botanical Gardens, enriched with the plants and flowers of every clime, look green, cool, and secluded; the city lies spread out before you, crowning the heights; with cozy villas, nestling amid groves of ornamental trees, and neat little cottages peeping out at every point. As we forge slowly ahead, winding channels appear on every side, each disclosing some view more lovely than its neighbour. The sky-line is broken by the steeples, towers, domes, and public buildings of the city; Government House, situate in a spacious demesne, beautifully laid out and kept, forms a prominent feature in the foreground, and the graceful façade and bold architecture of the mighty mass of building, now known to all the world as the Sydney International Exhibition, stands forth as an evidence to the arriving visitor, of the glorious promise, the boundless resources, and mighty future which is in store for this wonderful country.

To the right we have the north shore with its churches, terraces, and gardens; on the left Wooloomaloo seeming a huge city by itself; and far ahead, the piled-up masses of the buildings, all of solid sandstone loom out in the morning mist, vague, shadowy, and undefined, against the sky-line. Massive walls of masonry line the harbour on all sides, whilst each

fresh channel discloses endless shipping with its busy crews and labour-gangs. Looking back across the noble stretch of water, you see the Heads once more grimly guarding the portals of approach to this scene of wondrous beauty. It is, however, more from a nautical point of view that the magnificence of the harbour strikes your imagination. Here is deep water close up to the land on all sides, with room for the accumulated navies of the world. The harbour is entirely land-locked, and thus protected from every gale; it can be "made" in any weather, and its waters lie unruffled, no matter what hurricane may be raging without. It is indeed a noble refuge. Well may the natives of Sydney pride themselves on its possession.

Of the city itself, I am afraid that strict truthfulness compels one to give a less flattering estimate. A closer acquaintance does not disclose many fresh beauties. Sydney, even by its most pronounced admirers, is generally admitted to be a dirty town. The inhabitants have been so long in the habit of hearing this proverbial reproach of filthiness, levelled against their queen city of the south, as they delight to call it, that they have come to acquiesce in it; and in a half apologetic, half indignant way they reluctantly allow the truth of the general dictum. And yet, comparatively speaking, perhaps Sydney is not after all such a filthy town as is generally imagined. Certainly to see it during a continued spell of wet weather, when the mud is churned up on the macadamised roads, by the throng of vehicles, quadrupeds, and pedestrians, till the streets are covered foot deep in places, with the sloppy deposit, would not favourably impress a stranger. Or again, let the observant foreigner encounter the full

force of a "southerly buster," in one of the principal streets of the New South Wales metropolis; his remarks, if heard at all amid the dust-laden whirlwinds, will hardly be pleasant to hear, yet, under ordinary circumstances, the streets of Sydney are not half so bad as the tongue of detraction would make them. Granted, that in wet weather they are miry to a more than ordinary degree. Granted, that in dry windy weather, the dust whirls in eddying volumes through every thoroughfare, blinding the traveller, destroying clothes and any exposed merchandise, and exacerbating the temper, still, under similar circumstances, Sydney is not a whit inferior to other towns of equal pretensions, but might perhaps issue favourably from a comparison.

Take, for instance, Melbourne or even London. Sydney in its fiercest tornado, in its gustiest, dustiest, and bleakest day cannot for a moment vie with the whirlwinds and columns of dust, that completely blind the sun, on a windy day, in the Victorian capital. In her slushiest moments, the pavements are never so greasy, slimy, and dangerous to pedestrians, as are the pavements of the Modern Babylon during the continuance of a genuine November fog.

It has become quite the fashion with a certain class of travellers, to spy out only the bad features of a landscape. They have the nose of a sleuth-hound for an unsavoury taint, can follow the trail of a "drag," with unerring accuracy; but the fragrant perfume of the violet and woodruff, for them waste their sweetness on the desert air. It is no evidence of a cultivated taste, or even of much critical acumen, to be eternally finding fault. That the streets of Sydney are unfortunately narrow and crooked, that the pavements are rough

and uneven, that the drainage is defective, and that the order of street architecture does not come up to the marble glories of Tuscan Palaces or rich picturesque adornment of Princes Street in Edinburgh; no one will for a moment deny. But in this as in most other cases, the superficial aspect is not often the truest, and the apparent is not the most just criterion of the real.

The city, as I have said, is scarcely yet a century old. I do not intend in a book of rambling notes like this, to spin out a chapter on the earlier history of the Queen of the Pacific; but for its age, I think the natives may point with pardonable pride to the progress that has already been made:—and if the promise of present progression be maintained, Sydney will yet vie with some of the finest cities of the world for architectural wealth and magnificence, as she indubitably now surpasses most in the splendour and beauty of her natural position and surroundings. When in the old convict days, the first palisades were erected, and the barracks, gaol, stockades, stores, and other nondescript structures of a penal settlement were laid out, the founders of the tiny township could little have foreseen the mighty city that in so comparatively short a time was to extend its vast structures over all the surrounding heights.

The overflow of bricks and mortar has spread like a lava-flood, over the adjacent slopes, heights, and valleys, till the houses now lie, pile on pile, tier on tier, and succeed each other row after row, street after street, far into the surrounding country; and the eruption is still in active play, and everywhere the work of building and city extension proceeds at a rapid pace. The invasion of construction has bridged

the harbour, and laid out streets innumerable on the North Shore: masonry crowns every island in the spacious basin—every projecting buttress of rock maintains a pedestal of wall and gable and roof. Verandahs overrun the heights, and chimney-stacks peep out from the hollows. The sand drives are covered with cottages, the very marshes have a crop of dwellings, that are constantly springing up, like mushrooms; often alas, like that, very fragile and brittle and little calculated to withstand a lengthened wear and tear, nurtured in corruption and redolent of putridity and decay. Land is so valuable, that open drains have been boxed in with timber, and weather-board cottages have been in many cases erected on this fever propagating substructure. Handsome villa residences, match-box cottages, toy houses, and flimsy habitations stud the slopes in all directions round the city; and suburban extension is proceeding with wonderful speed. Everywhere the sound of the workmen's tools is heard, all through the busy day. Brick-yards are worked to their utmost capacity; iron foundries are taxed to their greatest powers, saw-mills and joinery establishments are in full activity, and at present the building trades are in constant and vigorous employment.

The villas in the suburbs of Sydney, those at least of the better sort, may well excuse a pardonable feeling of exultation on the part of the native-born New South Welshman. These villas, many of them, would do credit to any capital in Europe. Those of stone are built of the magnificent white sandstone for which the Sydney quarries are famous. It hardens by contact with the air, and assumes a rich warm yellow tint which is very effective, and pleases the artistic eye.

Even the less pretentious structures bear many marks of good taste, and an advanced order of embellishment. Indeed the suburban villas of Sydney inhabited by the well-to-do tradesmen, the highly intelligent, quick witted, practical, money-making middle classes, give one a high opinion of the material prosperity, and the solid domestic comfort which their appearance implies. But these unfortunately are only the plums in the pudding. The mass is composed of more objectionable elements.

When we come a step lower, and look at the workmen's dwellings, and speculators' houses, the picture is not without its shadows—Building Societies are very plentiful and numerically strong in membership in Sydney. The great aim of the well-to-do mechanic is to run up a house of his own. By aid of the building societies he is enabled to indulge his laudable hobby; but in his haste to become the possessor of this house of his own, which he so much covets, he is not so particular as he ought to be as to solidity of construction, and excellence of material. As a result of the prevalence of this desire of the artisan to become a proprietory householder, the land has acquired an abnormal value. Building sites are therefore enormously dear. Areas have to be circumscribed—societies, speculators, jobbers, have bought up all the estates, and vacant blocks around Sydney; and they divide and sub-divide, and cut up these, into little rabbit-hutch patches, and the houses spring up like bee-hive cells, each containing a working bee it is true; but little honey, I am afraid, will ever be extracted from the vast ever-growing hive.

To illustrate my meaning. There are few cottage gardens about Sydney. Land is too valuable and too much cut up into fifty-feet sections, to admit of horti-

culture. What gardening there is, is in the hands of chinamen, whose prosaic souls do not rise above the level of culinary roots and herbs. There are few flower-plots about the workmen's houses of Sydney. There are still fewer back gardens. The pot-herb patches, the mushroom beds, homely cabbage rows, of artisan dwellings in western Europe, are altogether wanting. The cottages are dependent entirely on purchased poultry and meat for the requirements of their *cuisine*, and where beef and mutton can be had all the year round from twopence to fourpence per pound, it is not considered worth the trouble to keep pigs or poultry in the back yard. I am strongly of opinion, that flowers exercise a deeply softening influence on those who are brought continually into contact with their bright presence, and I should like very much to see more attention bestowed on flower culture by the cottagers around Sydney, than seems to be in prospect at present.

Another indication of the absence of honey from this hive, is the dirt and disorder which characterizes the surroundings of many of these habitations. In the small back yards may often be seen a heterogeneous collection of battered kerosine cans, broken boxes, empty bottles, and the débris of turned preserves and provisions, worn-out shoes, and a general assortment of rubbish and filth, which are highly offensive to every sense, and cannot be conducive to health of body or mind. Sanitation seems utterly ignored. Be it understood that there are many pleasing exceptions to this state of affairs. Let no excitable Cornstalk let loose the vials of his indignation on my devoted head, and consign me to the tender mercies of all the infernal furies, as a vile detractor, a scurrilous scribe, a jealous,

venomous cynic, who libels wholesale a glorious people and basely truckles to the sneering antipathy that the bloated aristocrat ever bears to the horny-handed sons of toil.

Our "Cornstalk" cousins are keenly sensitive to criticism. They do not love adverse comment, and are rather jealous of anything savouring of depreciatory remark, but I only care to speak my own honest convictions, founded on observation.

Home readers ought to be told that "Cornstalk" is the generic nickname applied to the native-born New South Welshman. Its application was originally confined to the natives of the Hawkesbury river valley; they are thus dubbed from the prevailing tendency of the *adolescens simplex* of Australia to run somewhat more to length than to breadth. The young Queenslander, again, is called "A Banana boy." I really do not know if the young Victorians have a nickname at all, and on application to a friend of Sydney sympathies, to know if any there be, I was told, "No—they're not even worth a nickname."

One great drawback, immediately perceptible by even the most inexperienced or careless observer, is the narrowness of the principal streets. The great main artery of the older and business part of the city is George Street. This was formed on no definite plan. As the city grew in importance, and ship after ship began to find its way to the magnificent land-locked harbour, where they could lie secure from the vexed waters outside the Heads, and lay in ever-increasing cargoes of tallow, and hides, and horns, and wool, the buildings began to increase in numbers and size; but as yet they were built after no uniform plan, and with little perception of the great future that lay before

the city. The present site of George Street was then a bullock track, meandering over the ridges, and through the swampy hollows, and along this primitive *via dolorosa* the weary yoke-galled teams of oxen would drag their massive lumbering dray and its piled-up bales of wool, thick with the dust of a three or four months' journey, over the dusty tracks through the endless bush, on to the spacious *débouchement*, at Circular Quay. Along this track (at intervals that grew less frequent as time went on), public-houses and little shops, and general stores and blacksmiths' shanties, and other nondescript erections gradually rose, and lined the pathways, and thus slowly and unmethodically the great central street was formed.

Never was a glorious site for a city more unhappily spoilt. But the early settlers were not gifted with prescience, and many of their descendants, sad to say, seem blessed with no more advanced ideas than possessed the somewhat stolid and apathetic brains of their ancestors. The fairy godmothers of Sydney gifted her with a noble site, magnificent surroundings, and the finest building material in the world; but a combination of disorder, narrow-mindedness, impecuniosity, greed, jealousy, venality, have retarded her progress, and done their best to destroy her fair fame, and bring reproach upon her. But she is a handsome, and a progressive city in spite of it all, and if she maintains her present rate of progress, and finds capable and patriotic men to preside over her councils, she may yet sit among the nations, one of the proud cities of the universe, and claim with justice her boasted titles of the pearl of Australia and metropolis of the Antipodes.

Within the last ten years the strides which have

been made in every part of the ever-growing city in mural decoration are astonishing. In York Street for instance, the lower part of Pitt Street, and that lower portion of the city more particularly devoted to government buildings and offices, vast piles of buildings have been reared, which for breadth of design, harmony of detail and evidences of taste, wealth, and general excellence, will compare favourably with many of the most famous cities of the old world. York Street, reaching in a long vista of imposing fronts and princely edifices, closed at the one end by the magnificent proportions of the stately Town Hall and grand Cathedral, and opening out at the other into the trim, fresh greenery, and handsome mansions of Wynyard Square and gardens, forms a street that any capital might be proud of. Some of these merchants' palaces, built of the magnificent Sydney freestone, have cost upwards of 30,000*l.* and everywhere as old leases fall in, the work of demolition of old rookeries and reconstruction of handsome modern buildings proceed apace.

The new Lands Office, the Town Hall, the Museum, Cathedral, University, Post-office, Exchange, Mutual Provident Buildings, and the offices of banks and corporate bodies, are not one whit behind the best of similar structures in cities of much greater pretensions than Sydney, and many of the worst features of old Sydney are fast being obliterated, by the rapid march of modern taste and improvement.

Take for instance the splendid pile erected recently in Wynyard Square, for Messrs. Cowan and Co., the famous paper-makers. From the basement story, sunk in the solid rock, to the topmost tier of the stately front, everything that modern architectural skill and experience could dictate has been expended

in making the building a model of convenience and elegance. The erection alone cost 15,000*l.*, and the mere site, consisting of sixty-four feet of frontage by eighty feet of depth, is, at the present moment, worth upwards of 6000*l.* Ten years ago 1000*l.* would have been considered ample value for such a bit of land. In all parts of the city the price of building sites has increased in a like proportion. Frontages to Pitt and George Streets, in the more central and favoured spots, would now cost not less than 300*l.* to 400*l.* per foot.

Some of the more recent mercantile erections, such as those of Messrs. Dalton Brothers, R. Gray and Sons, Hoffnung and Co., John Fraser and Co., Newton Brothers, and many others, have cost certainly not less than from 20,000*l.* to 30,000*l.* each. This fact alone speaks volumes for the material prosperity of the colony, and it affords the strongest possible evidence that these firms have confidence enough in the future of the country, when they are found willing to invest such enormous sums in stone and lime.

While giving due praise, however, for whatever is praiseworthy, one cannot shut his eyes to the fact that, with better municipal government, the city might have been in a more advanced state now than it is. In the matter of sewerage, for instance, things are in an appalling state. Not wishing to state anything but bare facts, I applied to one of the aldermanic body for information on this subject. My informant is a shrewd, sensible man of the world, who has travelled far, and he is known as one of the most pushing, energetic, and successful contractors that has ever set foot in Australia. Referring to the lamentable defects in sanitary arrangements, and the

chronic indebtedness of the city, I got from him the following information in writing, which is interesting, and may be taken as correct:—

"The Commission of twenty-five years ago (1854), appointed by government, consisting of two or three irresponsible persons, in order to make a show of doing something for the benefit of the city, set to work and constructed, or rather misconstructed some sewers, and they could not have done much less, for the large amount of money they expended, than they did. For the workmen employed in the work drank champagne daily, the cost of which must have proceeded from the funds paid for the work—and such work! Some of the sewers were made with flat bottoms of rough, sand-stone flags. Where brick sides were built it was thrown together, and many of the sewers were only planked over with boards; these rotted and not unfrequently, after a storm, may be seen in Pitt Street the tops of these, all rotted away, and the metal and rubbish below in the sewer."

Things seem to have made but little progress in all these years, for the same system is still pursued. In the sewer leading to the Black Wattle Swamp, for instance, the crown of the sewer is above the roadway, and in many cases from six to eight feet above the floors of the cottages along the street.

"Thirty to forty years ago," continues my friend, "between what is now George and Pitt Streets, there ran and trickled a crystal stream, called the Tank Stream. Its course being over clean sandstone rock, it formed the water supply of old Sydney, and to make the most of it, large tanks were cut in the rock to retain a supply. By-and-by the houses got thicker and closer, until the water became too contaminated to

be used for drinking purposes, and the stream became more of a sewer than anything else, and at the same time very offensive. When the Commissioners carried out what they called improvements, they turned the sewage of the principal streets into this Tank Stream: and to this day a number of shops and houses about Hunter and Bridge Streets, are erected over this open sewer and over tanks, through which the sewage passes, and in many of the buildings, by taking up the flooring the sewage can be seen underneath. This is not yet rectified, for within the last few months a petition was presented to the Municipal Council, from some jewellers and others, stating that the effluvia arising from the sewage actually turned their metal-work blue.

"How persons can quietly live over such pest-generators is marvellous. And now the Corporation have not the power to borrow money to remedy these evils; in fact, as it now stands, they must not turn any more sewage into the harbour, or construct any sewer. We are promised next session an act to construct new sewers for Sydney, under a plan approved of by a Commission appointed twelve years ago for that purpose, and within the last year or two, corroborated by Mr. Clark, C.E., a gentleman sent for from England to examine into the sewerage and water supply for Sydney. But, while the grass is growing the steed is starving. Still, perhaps in another ten years, we may get some of the sewers made, and some few improvements inaugurated, if we are not all dead from typhoid in the meantime.

"But to return to the Commission of 1854. They managed to spend 3 or 400,000*l*., and got very little indeed for their money. It was a job from beginning to end. The contractor, it is said on good authority,

made upwards of 50,000*l.* profit from them, besides all the champagne and other drinks required in those thirsty times.

"It was about this time that the wharf on the west side of the Circular Quay was constructed, where the planking used was largely of spruce and other timber, that rots in a year or two, and upon this metal was placed; consequently, soon afterwards all had to be taken up and replaced, but not before all had been paid for previously.

"But this sort of thing came to an end, and about twenty years ago, the corporation as at present constituted undertook the management of the city, very foolishly without having had proper legislative powers given to them. For their Building Act was an abortive one, and could not be enforced. It was intended to enforce a sewage rate, but after levying it, they could not obtain payment, and so it lapsed, and it is only in this present year (1879) that a new Building Act has been passed by the Legislature, and also a new Sydney Corporation Act."

In answer to a question, What points in the Municipal system of Sydney most need reform, my correspondent goes, I think, very near the root of the difficulty. He says, "Many of the aldermen are men who came to the country thirty years ago, at the time young, and without experience, having only had the opportunity of seeing Sydney, or in some few cases perhaps Melbourne as well. They are therefore, deficient in knowledge of the progress achieved in other towns in municipal affairs, and the improvements constantly being made, and they consequently are narrow-minded, and inclined to fancy Sydney is the world."

He charges these "fossils of a primary epoch," with

want of enterprise or broad, liberal views, and with having no general experience, and his accusation is echoed by every independent newspaper in the country. And yet the citizens return such men year after year. Why? Because they fancy their rates will thus remain stationary, insufficient as they are to provide for the due government of the city, and though their wives may droop, and their little ones wither, and their streets be a reproach to the world, yet will their miserable pockets be untouched. It is only lately that one candidate for civic honours boasted on the hustings, that his principal claim on their suffrages was the fact, that "he had never been thirty miles outside of Sydney."

Under enlightened and liberal treatment, Sydney might be made truly a Paradise of residence, as one Sydney native called it. Unless capable men, however, take the helm, the present system of dust-bin and sink-hole will continue, and her name will stink in the nostrils of men, as her streets now undoubtedly do in a more literal sense in those of her pedestrians. Still, I have, while showing her defects, also pointed out a few of the promising features which exist.

I have shown the marvellous progress that has been made in some directions within the past few years. There seems to be a moving among the dry-bones. The fossils are disappearing, and vigorous and progressive young men are coming to the front. If the city's progress in some respects has been so pronounced in spite of all drawbacks, under the depressing influences of long-continued droughts, great commercial depression, hard times, and general depreciation of pastoral and station properties, what may we not expect to see within the next couple of decades? Our uneven pavements, our hambling shambling shops,

ricketty warehouses, and unsightly blocks of old-fashioned cramped structures, are rapidly giving place to buildings more worthy of the age, and more suggestive of the great future of the colony. The city will ever lie under the disadvantage of having her principal streets too narrow and tortuous, but many of the more superficial and potent objections that might be made to her ranking among the great capitals of the world are fast disappearing; and Sydney bids fair to become, what from her position and surroundings she was destined by nature to be, the fit representative of a great and powerful nation.

CHAPTER XIII.

Sydney shop-fronts—Verandahs—Hitching horses to the side-posts—Wonderful docility of the horses—How they are trained—Cabs and cabmen—The hotels—Drinking habits—The licensing system—Need of reform—Hotels and boarding-houses—The parks—Municipal incompetence—Loungers on the pavements—Shop-runners—The streets on Saturday night—The Sydney Larrikin—Selfishness of the wealthier classes—Honour to whom honour is due.

If one thing more than another detracts from the beauty and symmetry of the Sydney streets it is the verandahs in front of the shops. In the construction of these every shopkeeper consults his own will, and is a law unto himself. In such a climate where, for weeks at a time, blinding sunshine pours down on the dusty streets, awnings and verandahs are most grateful to the pedestrian, and at other times, in the cold weather, the shelter of these adjuncts to the shop-fronts affords a welcome protection from the pelting rain; but their beauty or elegance of design would seem to be in a directly inverse ratio to their utility. The principal streets are lined at intervals with porticoes, verandahs, and awnings, on both sides from end to end. Each structure is more hideously ugly than its neighbour. They are built on no uniform plan; at all angles, in every style of adornment, and they are emblazoned by ugly, vulgar, bare announcements, in

the worst possible taste, and with an utter absence of all artistic conception of grace or elegance. There may be one or two exceptions, but only a few.

Where land is so valuable and rents so high, one does not expect, at this early stage of the existence of Sydney as a city, to see great numbers of lofty shops and large plate-glass windows. The shop-windows of Sydney are, indeed, smaller and meaner looking than those of most capitals, but in the matter of awnings and verandahs the "Walers" had a grand chance for a bright, cheerful, artistic, ornamental display. They have entirely missed the opportunity. Both Pitt and George Streets might be rendered beautifully picturesque; but unsightly structures jut out into the streets, of all sorts of shapes, at various elevations, and formed of ludicrously incongruous materials. Some are altogether roofless, others are adorned with festoons of tattered sacking and tarpaulins. Some have iron, others wooden supports. Some hang so low as nearly to endanger the pedestrian's head, and the one verandah will sometimes have three or four different styles of colour and lettering. Now Sydney can boast of just as good sign-painters and decorators as any city at home; but the shopkeepers are not alive to the influences of artistic decoration. They go in for what is cheap and practical, which, in the matter of verandahs and sign-boards, certainly means the nasty and unsightly.

Another feature which is almost certain to strike the stranger with not a little wonder is the very common habit of hitching up horses to posts or pillars in the principal streets. At first sight, it would seem peculiar, to say the least of it, and decidedly against London notions, to leave a horse unattended and unattached to stand by the crowded pavement, and remain there un-

fastened, often for a considerable time. Sometimes the tired animal gets a little impatient, and plants his forefeet on the pavement, trying to attract the attention of his inconsiderate master, whom the influences of liquor, gossip, business, or oblivion have detained within for an unreasonable time and made forgetful of the existence of his faithful steed outside. The new comer feels a tremor of apprehension as he passes in close contiguity to the heels of Rosinante. Ladies and children have sometimes to leave the causeway to the steed in possession and make a détour into the mud of the roadway. After my first surprise, I must say the next feeling that took possession of me was unmitigated wonder at the marvellous docility of the horses themselves.

If ever the present rather stupid coat of arms of the "Waler" should be changed, a more apt symbol of the most marked characteristic of Young Australia could not be found than the presentment of the fabled Centaur. Nearly every colonist feels at home on horseback. The riding of most young fellows is fearless and faultless. They train their horses admirably, and most riding-horses, those, at least, that are used in and around towns, possess some pretensions to blood and breeding. I am told that the horses are trained to stand still, when left alone, in this manner. When undergoing the training process they are frequently left to themselves, but having attached to the halter a long rope, to the end of which is fixed a fourteen or twenty-eight-pounder ball or weight. Every time the horse attempts to stray or move away the weight pulls him up, and checks his motion. So docile are these handsome animals that they become perfectly disciplined, and will stand patiently waiting

the will of their dilatory master, often for hours at a stretch.

As I am on the subject of horses I may, in passing, mention the cabs of Sydney. These vehicles are about the best I have seen in any city. They are, as a rule, elegant in make, light in draft, roomy, clean, springy, and comfortable. The interior fittings are much above the average. The horses are generally sleek and well groomed, and "as miserable as a cab-horse" would be quite a misapplied proverb to the Sydney horses. Of the much maligned cabmen, what shall I say? On the whole, they are an intelligent, hardworking body of men. Many of them own the cab they drive, and take a real pride in having the turn-out respectable, or even stylish. They have a hard life of it. Constant exposure, frequent over-reaching by unscrupulous fares, and disbelief in their honesty or moderation are not the best means that could be employed for producing geniality of temper and a willing alacrity to oblige. Yet the Sydney cabmen, with few exceptions, are a smart, active, courteous body of men. At least, such has been my experience of them. They are not wanting in the proverbial sharpness of retort and quickness in repartee of their kind.

When so many utterly worthless channels are being constantly started in which to direct the streams of amateur philanthropy it would be well if some amiable person, yearning for an opportunity of winning honourable mention by the expenditure of superfluous wealth, would start a movement for the erection of cabmen's shelters. At most of the Sydney cab-stands, with the exception of a few in the crowded narrow parts of the city, these might be erected on the London model, and would be considered a boon by the cabmen.

The cab tariff is looked on by strangers as very excessive. The regular charge is four shillings an hour for the first hour, or ninepence for every additional quarter of an hour. The first idea is, that in a country of cheap horses this charge is prodigiously unreasonable; but a little reflection and judicious inquiry brings down the stranger to accept the charge, high as it is, as inevitable. In fact, the cabman will find it hard enough to make the current rate of a skilled labourer's wages, after paying for the keep of his horse, repairs to his cab, his licence, and other incidental expenses. Boatmen's fees are chargeable according to the distance that one may wished to be rowed. To simply visit a vessel in the harbour near the principal wharfs is sixpence for each passenger.

Australian cabmen drive at a rattling pace, oftener over than under the regulation, six miles an hour. After 10 p.m. they are allowed to charge half fare extra. On one occasion only did a Sydney cabman demand more than his proper fare from me.

The hotels of Sydney. Alas! the language of superlative praise is not here necessary. I had almost said there are *no* good hotels in Sydney. We are far behind Melbourne in this respect. In fact, so far as a building for hotel purposes goes, the only one really worthy of the name that I have seen in the whole colony of New South Wales is the Great Northern Hotel in Newcastle, the gritty, gloomy city of coal, and *entrepôt* of the Hunter River traffic and commerce. The same reasons that militate *as yet* against the erection of costly warehouses and spacious, handsome shops tell against the establishment of palatial hotels. In all colonial hotels, as a rule, the bedrooms are stuffy little bandboxes. The first consideration and

chief care of the colonial hotel-keeper is not the comfort of his lodgers and the supplying of their wants by a careful attention to their bed and board; but the all-engrossing thought is how to secure a goodly share of "bar practice." In fact, while there are multitudes of tapsters, bar-keepers, grog-sellers, there are very few, comparatively speaking, who really merit the title of hotel-keeper *par excellence*. The drink traffic in Sydney is a great curse. There are nearly 800 licensed public-houses in Sydney for the sale of alcoholic drinks. By Sydney I mean the city and suburbs. The population for which these drinking facilities exist is under 200,000. The last census made it 140,000. Taking the higher estimate, this gives a proportion of one public-house to every 250 inhabitants. The sum spent on drink and in drink traffic in the colony in 1878 was, according to the lowest estimate, 3,500,000*l*.

This sum would have bridged the gap between the terminus of the railway system and the sea. It would have provided public and commodious wharfs, with five hydraulic cranes, and all modern appliances for the loading and discharging of cargoes. It would have bridged the harbour, connecting the city and its northern isolated suburbs, and would have gone far to connect Sydney and Newcastle by rail. At the average cost per mile of the Great Southern Line it would have paid for the construction of 270 miles of railways in the interior. It would, otherwise applied, have conferred immense benefits on the country; as now spent, this enormous annual outlay propagates pauperism and vice of all sorts. It encourages disease, and breeds crime and destitution; it bolsters up a rotten fabric of adulteration, and it would be well if

the Legislature would for the nonce lay aside private squabbling and public political bungling, and unite to devise a measure by which this abominable traffic might be restricted within reasonable and proper limits, and dealt with in a manner more in accordance with sound statesmanship and Christian principle.

Now, I am no teetotaller or total abstainer. On the contrary, I like my wine or beer as well as any man, and I would not preclude any one from indulging his tastes in moderation; but as at present constituted the licensing system of New South Wales urgently needs reform, and is a crying evil in the land. The multiplication of low dram and drinking-shops is bearing its inevitable fruit in increased brutality, increased pauperism, a general lowering of the moral tone among the lower classes, and an augmented register of preventible diseases.

The principal objections to the present licensing system are these:—The granting of licences is vested in the hands of local benches of magistrates, who have received commissions from the heads of various governments in power as a reward for political support. Mental capacity or moral fitness are not the qualities looked for. Voting power is the article in demand. That there are among the honorary magistracy of the colony many able, intelligent, highly educated, and honourable men, no one will deny. Still, there are hundreds who have been pitchforked into this position, without having the slightest capacity or fitness for the honour. Political partisans have been and are appointed, not on account of their social position, their education or ability, but simply because they have been, or may be, useful to the men in power *pro tem.*; and in this way an obligation has in numerous

instances been liquidated, by the easy and cheap process of bestowing the title of J.P. on the person to whom the obligation has been incurred.

Again. In the list of justices of the peace there are a large number of persons who are or have been engaged directly or indirectly in the drink traffic, and others who own or are interested in public-houses. These are strong enough, and numerous enough, to pack the benches when applications for licences are preferred; and at times licences are granted in the most wholesale manner to all and sundry who apply.

Another objection, and a serious one, is a want of finality in the refusal. An application is made for a licence for a particular house. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood, or the police, or others interested, may show clearly that additional drinking accommodation is not only unnecessary, but calculated to prove injurious rather than beneficial. The application is refused. The applicant, like Bruce's spider, tries again, and is again refused. Watching time and opportunity, the applicant again and again renews his demand. In the end persistency not unfrequently wins the day, and a public-house may be planted in a neighbourhood where no necessity exists for it, and actually against the wishes of a majority of the residents.

Many good and wise men amongst all classes of the community have recognized the necessity that exists for coping with this growing evil. A Liquor Licence Amendment Association has been established, with Sir Alfred Stephen, the popular and respected lieutenant-governor as its president. By Mr. Holdsworth, the secretary, I have been furnished with a short *précis* of the aims and objects of the association. I cannot do

better than transcribe the document bodily, for the information of the reader. It is as follows:—

THE COUNCIL OF THE LIQUOR LICENCE LAWS AMENDMENT ASSOCIATION,

Having earnestly and carefully considered the best method of tranferring the licensing power to the people, have adopted the following principles of legislation, which would be just and moderate, yet effective:—

I. That the future control of the traffic in intoxicating liquors be vested in elective boards, to be called liquor licence boards.

II. That every electoral district in the province be declared to be a licensing district.

III. That every duly qualified elector on the electoral roll for such district be qualified to exercise one vote in the election of each member of the board.

IV. That the board consist of five members, who must be duly qualified electors for the district in which they are elected, that the board shall elect their own chairman, and that three shall form a quorum.

V. That all applications for the renewal or transfer or new licence of any public-house, wine shop, or other place for the sale of intoxicating liquors, must be made to the board for the district in which the premises are situated.

VI. That the boards be empowered to grant or to refuse all such applications, and that their decisions be final.

VII. That the boards be elected for three years;

vacancies by absence from three quarterly meetings in succession, death, or resignation to be filled up by the remaining members electing duly qualified persons, or in case of an equality in votes, by the governor in executive council.

VIII. That nominations of persons for such boards be made in writing, and signed by not less than six electors for the district, together with the written consent of the person nominated to act if elected.

IX. That all persons nominated for such boards shall deposit with the returning officer the sum of twenty-five pounds (25*l.*) prior to the day of election, such sum to be forfeited to the government should the person concerned fail to poll one-fourth of the votes polled by the lowest on the list of elected members.

This policy must be strong in its claims upon the country and the legislature. The machinery needed to carry out these changes would not be too expensive, and it would not be difficult to frame a measure which would be simple and direct in its operations, giving to them legislative effect.

When it is remembered that the annual cost of intoxicants in this colony amounts to millions of pounds, it is not too much to ask that a few hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds should be spent in exercising a legitimate and beneficial control over this dangerous traffic.

A select committee of the legislative assembly have recommended the appointment of licensing boards, and there cannot be any valid reason why these should be nominee boards, seeing that the question is one of

immediate concern to all as to whether licences shall be granted or not. The measure would also be very expansive and progressive in its working, and the restriction of the traffic in every district would be in exact accordance with the growth of public opinion.

Of course many minor provisions and regulations would be needed to make these recommendations effective, and to harmonize them with the other amendments in the law for which the association is contending.

This seems, indeed, a reasonable programme, and a laudable one. Some such legislation is needed to curb an evil which threatens to assume gigantic proportions, and prove a very grave and serious danger, and a standing menace to the well-being of society at large in the colony. While on the subject of drink and drinking habits, however, I wish to guard against possible misapprehension. The number of so-called hotels certainly strikes a stranger as being inordinately large. To hotels *per se* I have no objection. In all new countries there is a preponderance of males over females, of unmarried over married men. These solitary bachelors must find a habitation and a home. This accounts for many of the hotels. They are in reality primarily designed for boarding-houses. The sale of intoxicants should be but an auxiliary. Under the present licensing system the temptation is to make it the one essential *raison d'être*.

It must not be supposed that the colonials, as a class, are addicted to drink. The middle classes, the tradesmen, shop-keepers, young fellows in banks and offices, are indeed a most temperate people. As colonial wine increases, too, in public estimation, the taste for fiery stimulants will more and more decrease. Among many of the working men, and the lower class

of labourers and loafers, however, the consumption of drink is far too lavish. Yet little open drunkenness is to be seen. There are far fewer drunkards visible in Sydney than in Glasgow for instance, and the liquor supplied is probably better in quality.

Although much deplorable and remediable drunkenness exists, the New South Wales people, as a people, are a temperate race, and the young generation, while it betrays such a pleasing partiality for, and decided appreciation of healthy, manly, out-of-door athletic sports and exercises, bids fair, among the virtues of manly pluck and honest endurance, to cultivate temperance, that most admirable of virtues.

To hark back to our hotels. It seems somewhat invidious to single out one or two for mention, yet as I but give my individual experiences, they need only guide those who believe in my capability of judgment. Petty's Hotel has long been acknowledged to hold premier position as the aristocratic and select resort. Some, of course, dispute this—notably the proprietors of other hotels. Petty's is a very old-established house. I spent nearly three months in it, when Mr. Lahel was manager, and I was never more comfortable anywhere. The situation is retired, quiet, central. A new wing is being now built. The original building is old and rambling, and the rooms are small; but the *cuisine* is excellent. It has passed into new hands lately, but seems to retain all its ancient *prestige*. Pfhalerts, in Wynyard Square, generally ranks next in order of importance and excellence. A capital *table d'hôte* is kept, at which many of the best-known men in this town may daily be seen at lunch-time.

A formal hot lunch of three courses—soup, joint, sweets, with cheese and salad to follow, seems to be *de rigueur* with the Sydney mercantile or professional

man. There are no chop-houses after the London plan. There are depôts for the sale of fried fish and oysters, but the Sydney eating-houses are not appetite-inspiring as a rule. The Exchange is much patronized by brokers, insurance men, bank clerks, juvenile lawyers, and investors generally. It is a good hotel. The Royal, in George Street, is a capital commercial hotel, and one of the oldest in the city. My favourite is the neat and clean Imperial Hotel, in Wynyard Square, with the *beau-ideal* of a good old English host in its stalwart proprietor. He is one of a not by any means too numerous class of hotel-keepers in the colonies. There are some who look on themselves as little demigods. To speak to them might cost you your bedroom, and a salutation is charged as an extra in the bill. At the Imperial the master is not above his profession, and his first care is the comfort of his guests.

The hotel-keepers are strict men in Sydney, if not in the estimation of the public, at least in their own. Several of them monopolize the chief seats in the synagogue of municipal government, one or two sit in the great Sanhedrim, and legislate for the people, and the best of the class are shrewd, energetic, liberal-minded men. But the small bedrooms, the bad whisky, the indifferent cookery, the generally agressive assumption of being the obliging, and not the obliged party, strike the foreigner not very agreeably. The "New Chum" is fair game for all and sundry.

I have mentioned Wynyard Square and Hyde Park. These are two of the lungs of Sydney. The former is centrally situated, and very tastefully laid out, and neatly kept. All the hotels in the square are good, and the lodging-houses, of which there are many, are

excellent. Charges are moderate. First-class hotels afford a room, with use of public rooms, and good board for from two to three guineas per week. Some of the more ambitious, such as Petty's, charge 3*l.* 10*s.* Capital lodgings can be got for twenty-five to forty shillings with board. The price is chiefly affected by the locality in which the house is situated. Those nearer the parks, and in the neighbourhood of the Domain, will cost from two to three guineas per week. Moore Park is another of the lungs of the great city, but lies at some distance from the central portions of the metropolis, and near Moore Park is the famous Randwich Race-course, where high carnival is held on occasions. The matter of public parks for our colonial towns and cities has only lately begun to attract attention, and rouse intelligent discussion. The necessity for having these health-giving resorts would not seem to have been even faintly realized by the original founders of our colonial cities, for almost no reserves were made, or lands dedicated for the purpose. Indeed of late years, in many instances, land for public recreation-grounds has been bought back by the state at immensely enhanced prices, after having been alienated by government for a mere song. The *Echo*, in a sensible and concise little leader on the subject, puts the matter very neatly. "The reason," it says, "why a suitable recreation-ground is not to be found in the centre of every considerable population is in a great measure political, to some extent municipal, and very largely owing to the want of foresight and energetic persevering action on the part of the inhabitants of the districts specially interested. The municipal councils are what the ratepayers make them; and if they elect men who haven't a soul above gutters, what can

they expect but to have their money squandered, and to dwell in the midst of dirt and discomfort? The Legislative Assembly is what the people make it; and if they choose as their representatives men of narrow views and bitter spirit, what can they expect but squabbling, mud-throwing, and obstruction? We are not in a position to say that the Assembly does not represent the people. Unfortunately the people have been too much absorbed in money-grubbing and pleasure-seeking to perform aright their duties as good citizens, and so the whole body politic has become tainted with disorder. When the new Constitution Act came into operation in 1856 the city of Sydney presented a 'frightful example' of municipal neglect and mismanagement, and after all these years it is still a 'frightful example.' Since that time we have had the Municipal Act of 1858, and the later statute of 1867; but both have been, to a great extent, signal failures. They have not prevented a state of things growing up in the suburbs, as odious as that which existed in Sydney in 1858, and which has now become still more aggravated. Year after year open spaces, which might have been secured to the public on easy terms, have been subdivided and built upon, and there has been no power vested in the municipalities to prevent the carrying out of plans which have inflicted, and will continue to inflict, serious injury on the metropolis. Thus we have houses being built over foul sewers, covered only with a few rough boards and a little sand; and to-day, not far from Eveleigh, may be seen a large number of alignment posts lying on flat, undrained ground, and half covered with water. Who expects that such land can be built upon without peril, not only to those who occupy it, but also to the

whole community? A few miles away a large estate has been cut up for sale. A portion of it would make an excellent reserve, but cannot with impunity be built upon in the manner proposed. We want for the suburbs an authority which would prevent the greed of landowners from permanently injuring the metropolis. But what chance have we of obtaining a restriction of this kind unless it be imposed directly by the Legislature? What ought to have been done many years ago was to have secured open spaces in suitable localities all over the metropolitan area," &c.

Another exasperating habit of the Sydney street-lounger is the persistency with which he blocks up the pavements in the principal streets, and at the busiest crossings. The police are much to blame for allowing this. Great hulking fellows slouch round the bar-room doors, and at the crossings, swearing and expectorating, till earth and air become tainted with filth and profanity. The police move backwards and forwards, with that provoking assumption of know-nothingness, which gives a dreamy, far-off look to the eye of the helmetted, white-cotton-gloved guardian of the peace. How different from the smart business-like activity of the London prototype. The control of street traffic, and a proper regard to the convenience of pedestrians, ladies especially, seem to be points utterly beyond the ken of the Sydney policeman. In no other city, with which I have any acquaintance, would this odious habit of loafing on the pavements be allowed to such an extent without very practical protest.

Shop-runners are another feature of these principal streets. Men, having generally a very Hebraic profile, stand balancing themselves on their heels on the ex-

treme edge of the kerbstone. They are generally hatless and coatless. Their linen ought to be at the wash. The shops to which they are supposed to be attached are dark, gloomy, dingy dens. All the light of day is excluded by festoons and rows of slop-made garments, boots and shoes, remnants, cheap drapery and haberdashery, which overflow into the street, and hide the whole front of the shop. These coatless individuals solace themselves with bad tobacco and cheap cigars when trade is less brisk than usual, and they wheedle and importune the passers-by to look at their wares, in a manner very suggestive of Burra Bazaar in Calcutta, especially, too, if the pedestrian evidence by gait, dress, speech, or complexion, that he comes from the rural districts. Most of the clothing worn by the bulk of the people is bought ready-made. Slop-suits are the prevailing style. The common ruck of the Sydney populace are about the worst-dressed section of the Anglo-Saxon race, so far as good taste is concerned, that I have ever seen.

The Sydney populace can be seen best, in all its glory, on a Saturday night. 'Tis then they turn out in countless swarms, and throng the streets in thousands till nine or ten o'clock. It is a merry, good-tempered, orderly crowd, but the Sydneyites are as fond of a street promenade, as Parisian or Neapolitan. The markets are crowded. Shops flare with the garish glitter of gas. Cheap Jacks shout till they are hoarse. Barrel-organs and even more objectionable itinerant musicians, load the air with doubtful melody. There is a densely-packed, slowly-surging mass of people occupying all the breadth of the street. Young fellows banter young women, with more vigour than refinement of expression or refinement of manner or

phrase. Most of the housewives carry the family basket, and make purchases here and there, as flesh, fruit, vegetables, clothing, groceries, or luxuries come before them. The men are comfortably dressed, so far as slop-suits admit of comfort. Nearly all of them smoke. The whole population is out of doors. It is the working man's weekly festival. On the whole it is a pleasant sight, and rarely marred by scenes of violence, drunkenness, or misbehaviour. It is rough, doubtless, but it is a hearty, jovial, good-humoured roughness, and everything bespeaks a rude plenty, a vigorous, well-contented, well-fed, well-housed, well clad, well-paid, working population. When we can add well-governed, and thoroughly well educated, we shall see a magnificent race, and the future is not without signs of hopeful promise.

The Sydney larrikin, as the street Arab, the antitype of the London rough, or Liverpool loafer, or New York hoodlum, is called, is the most detestable creature on the earth's surface. Devoid of respect for age, sex, or rank, he is an unmitigated nuisance, a hateful thing, abhorrent to every right-minded citizen. The larrikins are numerous in Sydney. They are brutal cowards, who would not hesitate to rob a sick child, or steal the letters off a gravestone. They insult women, assault unwary pedestrians, defy the police, haunt the parks at night, are up to every villany and outrage.

Larrikinism threatens dire consequences. The respectable classes growl and grumble, and occasionally write letters to the papers, and abuse the police and the aldermen, and the clergy, and government. But as for subscribing to night schools, or city missions, or organizing benevolent and philanthropic societies, such

as exist in other great cities, these things are not thought of. "Am I my brother's keeper?" they ask. "We are too busy gambling, and pot-hunting, and overreaching and manipulating politics, and plundering the treasury, and rigging the market, to lose time over mawkish sentimentality. Let the parsons, and the police, and the government look to it. They are paid to put down larrikinism. What have we to do with it?"

Overdrawn, you say? I wish it were so. Mammon-worship is the fashionable religion, and the waifs and strays of humanity, the larrikins and criminal classes, and indigent, uneducated brethren of the alley and the gutter, may go hang, for all that Dives cares. As a community, I accuse the Sydney richer classes of callous, cynical disregard of duty, in this and in other respects. They will encourage sport, spend money on ostentatious display, eat well, drink freely, live merrily, pursue wealth and pleasure with desperate keenness, but philanthropy is not their strong point. Religion is counted well enough for the women and the parsons, and a cold, selfish indifferentism spreads among men, until the moral tone of the nation is in danger of being seriously depreciated. A spirit of unworthy dependence on government to do everything, while the individual shall do nothing, is on the increase, and bodes ill indeed for the growth of vigorous, manly self-reliance, sound national life, and a pure political atmosphere.

All honour to the brave ministers of religion, who struggle on, often almost single-handed, in the midst of indifferentism and cynical contempt. Myself a son of the manse, I can well appreciate the self-denying lives that they mostly have to lead. The money-grubbing parvenus, of whom there are hundreds in and

around Sydney, treat them with offensive patronage or covert ridicule; church-going and parochial work are not fashionable with many of these plutocrats; and spiritists, free-thinkers, religious sensation-mongers and irresponsible hobbyists, are often *fêted* and caressed in very high circles indeed, when the patient, upright Christian gentleman and minister is misrepresented and maligned. My remarks are only applicable to a section of the community, but it is a section that is powerful, wealthy, numerically strong. We all know the proverb,—Set a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the devil. If the restraints of religious training and example are removed; if an ultra-democratic upheaval should take place, and more improbable things are on the cards;—then let these purse-proud, self-indulgent, and apathetic favourites of fortune look to it. They may find the horse become unmanageable, and bring them to their destination sooner than is to their liking.

CHAPTER XIV.

Workmen's combinations—Fear of strikes retards industry—Condition of the Australian workmen—Swagsmen and Loafers—Friendly Benefit Societies—Rules, working, and objects—The club doctor—Abuses in the system—Accident Assurance—Comparison—Life Assurance—The Mutual Provident Society—The Mutual Life Association—Insurance agents—Insurance returns—Australian prosperity—Building Societies—Workmen's wages—Labour—Summary.

ONE characteristic feature of the social economy of our Australian Cousins is the system of mutual assurance, which so largely prevails in all the towns, and which, under the guise of friendly benefit societies, supplies all the real benefits of the poor-law system at home, without its cumbrous and expensive machinery.

These societies are principally organized and supported by the working classes. Their numbers and opulence (in many cases) afford a very pleasing and practical refutation of the theory of the anti-immigrationist, that the country is over-stocked with labour, and that the working man is ground into the dust. Such views are altogether one-sided and distorted. Wages rule high, and for unskilled labour there is always an active demand. Where skilled workmen congregate in masses in the towns, as is the too common tendency, of course there is apt to be a glutted market. Workmen's combinations, however,

in such a democratic country as Australia, are all-powerful. They do not use their power wisely. The fear of strikes keeps back many a struggling industry, and locks up capital. The excessive wages paid to workmen in all constructive occupations hinders the extension of building operations. Better and more plentiful houses would be built were labour only cheaper. What the workmen gain in high wages they lose in high rents, and dear clothes, groceries, and other necessaries.

For all this, the Australian artisan is infinitely better fed, better housed, and better paid than his brethren in the old country. For handy, active wrights, blacksmiths, joiners, &c., and willing labourers, there is practically an unlimited field in the country districts. They will always earn a livelihood, if they will work. Many come out with the idea that they will get rich all at once. This is nonsense. A man must patiently plod, and trust to build up a good connexion, and lay by surplus savings, here as elsewhere; but at the end of ten years, if the artisan be steady and saving, he will be in a better position pecuniarily than he would be at the end of twenty years at home. Education for his children, thanks to our public schools, is everywhere available, is cheap and excellent. His political status is infinitely superior to what it would be at home. He has a glorious climate. He need never want work. Food is fairly cheap and always abundant, and all that is wanted is pluck, perseverance, and thrifty self-denial.

I have already marked a few of the rocks and pitfalls which lie in the path. In fact, the working man here is made perhaps too much of. Many of them cannot stand the sunshine of prosperity. It

makes them altogether too mellow, and they go at the core. This is true of a great number who swell the ranks of the loafer and "sun-downer," and drift into an aimless and shiftless life. Such men swarm in many of the country districts of Australia. Here is an extract from an employer of labour in the far west of Queensland which is very pertinent to the point. Referring to a previous article in the *Queenslander* on the "Unemployed in the Interior," in which allusion had been made to "common swagsmen" and the hundreds of men who are travelling our roads in search of work, the writer, who signs himself "An Outsider," says,—

"Almost all these 'swagsmen' have, during the last six years or more, been earning wages which, with ordinary care, would have enabled them to lay by from 10*s*. to 30*s*. per week over and above what would have sufficed to keep them in a style of living that in almost any other country would be considered luxurious among workmen; for be it remembered that, besides wages ranging from 15*s*. (in very few cases) to 40*s*. a week, these men have been supplied with ample rations, and it is only their inexpensive clothing and tobacco (if they smoke) that they have to pay for, and for these from 5*s*. to 10*s*. a week is surely an ample allowance. That men can (if they choose) save money to the extent I have mentioned is proved by the fact that many, I may say most of them, do so for a time, without in the least stinting themselves of such luxuries as a bush store provides, and a small proportion—perhaps one in twenty—continue this economy until they become men of independent means. But because the rest of these men choose to invest their savings in poisoning themselves with villainous liquors,

and 'shouting' for their friends, are you, sir, and I, and the respectable careful workmen, and, in fact, all who have exercised sufficient economy and self-control to enable them to tide over a pinch like the present, without being reduced to the last extremity of destitution; are we, I say, to be taxed to provide work for a host of spendthrifts such as form a large proportion of 'common swagsmen'? I can see neither sense nor justice in it, nor can I comprehend why workmen should be taught that they are the only class in the community who can 'eat their loaf and have their loaf,' or that it is the duty of the government (i.e., the community) to provide them with a fresh loaf when they have eaten their own. I can say with truth, that I have never turned a man away without assistance when he has represented himself as needing it; but I confess it is a hard pull to dole out my hard-earned stores to a lot of able-bodied, sturdy beggars, who for years past have been earning double the wages that ever fell to my lot when I first began life in the bush, or for many a year after. Another feature in this business is, that many of these men will not take work, when offered, except at the extravagant rate of wages to which they have been accustomed, and which employers are no longer able to pay. A man who accepts your bounty over night will probably receive your proposal to take a small flock of sheep at 15*s.* a week and rations with contempt. This actually happened lately in a case under my own observation. Another man gave up his work and took the road rather than accept 1*l.* per week and rations."

The foregoing reflects very fairly the views of many honest, straightforward employers of labour, who

speak without prejudice, and with no wish to depreciate the real hard-working labourer.

Were all workmen's combinations as harmless in their nature and beneficial in their operation as the friendly benefit societies, there would be less of the mutual distrust between classes that unfortunately prevails, and a corresponding incentive given to earnest effort in striving to open out new industries and develope the resources of the colony. As a sample of what is being done by these excellent institutions, and to give a rapid sketch of their aims and character, let me instance Newcastle as a pretty fair sample of the position of affairs in other towns throughout the colony. I do not profess to give a detailed statistical account of these societies; that is not the object of my book. The few facts I record may be interesting to the general reader, and the trustworthiness of my statements may be depended on, as I have them from the best procurable authority.

The friendly benefit society is really a system of mutual assurance against accident and disease, and from 80 to 90 per cent. of the working classes in and around Newcastle are so protected. The better known and most popular societies are the Odd Fellows, Druids, Sons of Temperance, Protestant Alliance, Roman Catholic Guild, and Working Men's Benefit Societies, Clubs, Lodges, of various kinds. The majority of these provide for their members medicines, medical attendance, and an allowance varying from 15*s.* to 1*l.* per week during illness. Most of them, too, have a burial fund, which provides sums ranging from 5*l.* to 20*l.* on the death of each individual of the family of a subscribing member. The subscriptions vary from ninepence to one shilling per week, and there is

usually an entrance-fee, charged upon a sliding-scale, according to the age of the individual at the date of his entrance into the society.

One very excellent club is that established by the employés on the Great Northern Railway. The subscription here is one shilling per week. During sickness the allowance from the fund is 1*l.* weekly, and any surplus remaining at the end of the year is rateably distributed amongst the members at Christmas. In this club no medical attendance is provided.

A very common result of the system in many clubs is this:—When the percentage of sick, or those who come on the fund from accident or other causes, gets beyond the calculated average, as it often does, the weekly allowance is cut down *pro rata*. In cases of long-continued illness, the funds in weak societies are sometimes all swallowed up. Levies have to be made. Members keenly watch each other. A deal of espionage goes on. Anonymous letters pour in on the officials. The doctor is subjected to a deal of galling interference, criticism, and unasked advice, and everything is not *couleur de rose*. Malfeasance occasionally crops up. Runaway treasurers are not unknown; but, in all fairness be it said, such mishaps are rare, and the benefit societies, as a rule, are a credit to the working men who get them up and support them. Some of them, such as the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows, have immense accumulated funds.

Much of the successful working of these societies doubtless depends on the office-bearers. It is creditable to the intelligence of our working men, the wonderful organization and smooth working which generally characterizes the procedure. Occasionally,

as I have said, one may hear of a defaulting secretary, of malversations and stupid bungling; but the mutual system gives each one a stake in the general efficiency, and a very high standard of efficient economic working is the rule. Sometimes useless sums are squandered on insignia, in banquets, in misapplied charities, and in other objectionable ways; but the resultant of the working is an undoubted diminution of suffering, a fostering of forethought and self-denial, a dissemination of friendliness and increased social good fellowship, and an alleviation of much distress and hardship.

The most important factor in the equation, however, is perhaps not so much the officials as the doctor. On his tact, temper, aptitude, and practical sagacity everything hinges. It is true that fines are imposed and punitive measures adopted for an infraction of the rules by members, and each one watches the other to see that no undue advantage be taken of the funds; yet, after all, the doctor is the most important item in the sum-total. On his assiduity and loyalty all the distribution of the benefits of the mutual assurance practically depends. It is a difficult, a delicate, and often a thankless task. He must study the idiosyncrasy of each individual member, and reconcile their particular claims with his duty to the lodge or club, or society, as a whole. It demands no ordinary diplomacy. He often gets little thanks. He often encounters downright meanness and ingratitude.

It is optional for members to go on the medical list, but the majority do go on it. The subscription to this is 6*s*. 6*d*. per quarter, and there is no difference made between a single man and a married man, who has perhaps his quiver full of olive branches. Here, at the outset, is one stumbling-block for the doctor. He

has to give attendance and medicine to a man, his wife, and family of perhaps fifteen or twenty children. The race is very prolific in New South Wales. This is hard on the doctor.

Per contrà, the doctor has not to supply wines, medical comforts, leeches, or poultices. However, he has to supply medicines, splints, and surgical instruments. In midwifery cases, provided fourteen days' notice is given, he is paid a fee of one guinea. This, it must be confessed, is a cheap immigration system. No allowance is made for fractures or surgical operations.

In Newcastle all the miners contribute their weekly sixpence to the doctor's fund, and about 4000*l.* is in this manner paid for medical attendance in Newcastle and the surrounding mining townships. Without a doubt the benefit society system exercises a beneficial influence on the working classes. It engenders in them a laudable forethought and prudent provision for a rainy day. As a system for securing medical relief during sickness it is far superior to the poor-law system, where government provides such attendance at public expense, and opens the way to abuses which are too well known for me to recapitulate here.

In starting the system of accident assurance here the promoters had all this friendly benefit system to contend against. As soon as the society was formed, I mean the Australasian Accident Assurance Association, I had the honour to be nominated as secretary, a post which I still occupy. We are the only purely accident association south of the line, and we have had an uphill task so far to educate the minds of the public into an appreciation of our objects, aims, and character. The idea was quite new to the majority of the people, and we were looked on with much suspicion. The

general idea was that it was some new swindle got up by Sydney "dodgers."

Existing insurance societies, from the empyrean heights of their immaculate orthodoxy, looked upon us as a nondescript sort of corporation. The working men especially eyed us with grave suspicion. But we worked hard and ploddingly, and at our annual meeting the other day we were able to show very creditable results indeed. We issued during this year 1550 policies, taking in premiums over 4000*l.*; and after meeting all claims, writing off all preliminary and other expenses, we go on our way with a good progressive business well established, our capital all available and well invested, and a growing belief in the soundness of our management and the excellence of our aims becoming more and more general and widespread.

Comparing our career so far with, say, the Scottish Accident Company, we have outpaced it completely, and though we have not as yet touched the working classes much, I look forward with hope and confidence to a great and prosperous career for the society. That we have an ample field the following extract from *The Australasian Banking and Insurance Record* for January of the present year (1879) will show:—

"From a table of violent deaths from 1867-76 it appears that during these ten years 7723 persons (6225 males and 1498 females) died from accidents. In 1877 accidents caused the death of 726 persons (553 males and 173 females). Taking into account the total number who died during these eleven years, we find that of the males *one in every eleven died of an accident.* As a practical conclusion, we think the statistics of violent deaths show that there is abundant

scope in this colony for the operations of an aceident company, the rate of mortality from accidents being *more than double* that in the United Kingdom."

The whole question of insurances is one that tells well in favour of the colonists. Much thriftlessness and self-indulgence is indeed to be deplored; but it says a great deal for the internal prosperity of the country that life assurance is so popular and so universal. It is a very common charge against Australians, that of extravagant habits and spendthrift propensities. To some extent, doubtless, it is true, and especially as regards workmen and the lower classes. The bulk of the people undoubtedly spend more freely and indulge in more luxuries than come within the reach of corresponding classes in more densely peopled countries. Where wages are high, hours of labour not excessive, and the cost of living fairly cheap, it is only natural that money should be freely spent. The people in the middle ranks, however, have a keen appreciation of the value of money, and almost every one who can afford it insures his house, his goods, and his life.

No better instance of the astounding growth of this kind of business could be given than the rise and progress of our oldest and best-known office—The Australian Mutual Provident Society. Its early history reads like a chapter from a novel.

In the beginning of the year 1849 a few philanthropically disposed gentlemen perfected a scheme, principally with a view to provide deferred annuities for worn-out clergymen, but generally to embrace the business of life assurance. It reads like a grim satire on the pomp and circumstance which attend the floating of public companies now-a-days, to be told

that at the inception of the Mutual Provident Society the office had no capital, paid no salaries to secretary or directors, and laid the foundation of its present greatness in the upper story of a grocer's shop, over the door of which hung a gilt coffee-pot, which served to relieve the monotonous life of the office-boy, who presumably constituted the entire clerical staff of the office. With a secretary and directors whose disinterested self-denial constituted their only claim to any acquaintance with the doctrines of life-contingencies, and with a constituency altogether ignorant and somewhat sceptical of the advantages of the scheme, it is not to be wondered at that the business was small. In the first year 45 policies were issued, assuring 10,100*l.*, and producing a premium income of 361*l.* In the thirtieth year of its existence, just closed, the new business was 6209 policies assuring 2,175,942*l.*, and producing a new income of 73,132*l.* Few more telling tributes to the thrift and prudence of the middle class "colonials" can be found than the simple comparison here instituted. True, the business of the office has been pushed with a persistent and unvarying energy, but no amount of perseverance would induce people to embark in a scheme the advantages of which appear so remote, unless they were impressed with the conviction that they were discharging a sacred duty. It must not be supposed that the Mutual Provident Society passed from its humble and unpretentious beginning to its present colossal development without experiencing many vicissitudes. For many years it gave but little promise; business came slowly, and the public continued apathetic. During the first fifteen years of its existence it issued only 4800 policies, considerably less than it does now in a single

year. But the care with which its resources had been tended began to bear fruit, and about 1864 the large profits which the office had amassed drew public attention to the benefits which it offered, and members began to come in at the rate of from 1000 to 1500 a year. In 1868 the present actuary, Mr. M. A. Black, joined the office, and owing to certain representations made by him a "case for opinion" was submitted to three of the most eminent English actuaries. The result of this reference was, that the old system of dividing the profits was abandoned for a more equitable and intelligent one, and many illiberal and effete conditions with which the policies had been hitherto burdened were abolished. New privileges were accorded to members, and the practice of the office was popularized by the introduction of all the most liberal conditions which the history of life assurance indicated to be safe and just. As a result of this new and public-spirited departure from its traditional path the office has grown in public favour and confidence to an extent altogether unheard of in the annals of British life assurance. During each of the last four years it has transacted an amount of new business exceeding that of any other British office during a similar period, and the little struggling infant, which thirty years ago was domiciled amid the spicy odours of a grocery shop, has developed into the lusty manhood of an institution with successful branches in all the colonies, with upwards of 35,000 policies in force, covering assurances for nearly fourteen millions sterling, from which it derives an income of 622,000*l.* The accumulated funds have reached the sum of 2,600,000*l.*, and the office has already divided as cash profits upwards of 900,000*l.*

With such an encouraging example it might have been expected, in this age of keen competition, that the Mutual Provident would not be allowed virtually to keep the field to itself.

Until 1869, however, this was practically the case; for the English companies did not seem to realize adequately the opening there undoubtedly existed, and they only did a very limited business through their agents.

In that year, however, another Douglas entered the lists. A prospectus was issued by a new institution styled the "Mutual Life Association of Australia," having a board of directors composed of well-known and influential citizens.

The distinguishing features of this office were stated to be indefeasible policies and low rates of premiums, and these soon recommended themselves to the public, especially the former, which, though looked upon at the time as rather a bold innovation, has since been followed more or less fully by all the Australian life offices.

The failures in England of the Albert and European had undoubtedly a depressing effect upon life assurance here, but ultimately tended to strengthen the claims of local institutions, as against others whose management was at such a distance as to be beyond the ken or scrutiny of their constituents at the Antipodes. Consequently the young association made good progress, and to the 261 members composing it, at end of its first year, it has had a continued accession of new assurants; until now (July 1879) it numbers over 5000, holding policies amounting to 1,600,000*l.* sterling, and producing annual premiums of 57,000*l.*, while its invested funds are 115,000*l.* During these

ten years over 50,000*l.* have been paid for claims by deaths of members.

Until quite recently no other life office had been started in Sydney; but two new societies, the City Mutual and Intercolonial, have recently been started, with every prospect of a successful career. Fire and marine companies may be counted by the dozen.

In Victoria, with characteristic energy, no less than seven mutual life societies and three proprietary companies have been for some years in operation, and at least one half of these, engaging in most eager competition for business, in pursuit of which several have recently opened business in Sydney, are bringing life insurance within the reach of all classes. Wonderful, indeed, is the energy displayed by those indefatigable pioneers of prudence, the life assurance agents. Accompanied by a doctor, they traverse the length and breadth of this mighty continent. They penetrate into the most remote recesses of the interior. They endure privations and fatigues that would rival the achievements of the early explorers. They outvie even the proverbially astute and energetic Bagman.

Seeing that so large an amount of money is yearly invested by the public in life assurance, and that the New South Wales Legislature long ago recognized the importance of the subject by passing an Act protecting policies from creditors in event of insolvency, it is strange and regrettable that no such law as the English Life Assurance Act of 1870 has yet been put upon the Statute-book. Uniform returns are required from all banks in the colony, and I maintain that they are equally necessary for life offices, considering the interests involved and the enormous sums at stake.

It may give a further idea of the way in which this business is pushed, to acquaint the reader that, from trustworthy returns, I find the new business done by seven Australian life offices in 1878 was 11,718*l.* policies, insuring for 3,704,828*l.*, yielding an annual premium of 128,319*l.* The total premiums received during the same year by the same offices, for new and renewal business was 601,664*l.*

In the face of such facts as these, it is absurd to say that the people are starving, that workmen cannot find a livelihood, that protection to native industries is needed, and that immigration is swamping the country with paupers, and the working man is being ground to the dust by poverty and the stagnation of trade.

In the foregoing necessarily brief *résumé*, I have omitted one most important set of institutions, which demonstrate, even more forcibly than do the friendly benefit and insurance societies, the material prosperity of the working man in Australia, and the immense sums of money which are earned by the wage-getting class. It must also be taken as a pleasing illustration of a deal of thrift and prudence on the part of a great number of their class, and considering that it is only the better amongst them who subscribe to these associations, the luxury and lavishness which on the whole characterize artisan life in Australia can be in some degree realized.

These building societies are now flourishing in nearly every Australian town of any importance. They are excellently and economically administered. They are in fact, to a certain extent savings-banks. They take deposits from subscribers every month or fortnight, make advances on mortgage to such as want to build and become owners of their homes, and they doubtless

are in great part answerable for the small dwellings and deleterious subdivision of land around our great metropolis and other large towns. Some idea of the magnitude of their operations may be formed from the annual receipts of one society alone in Sydney. Let me take, for instance, the "Industrial and Provident Permanent Benefit, Building, Land, and Investment Society, and Bank for Savings." The title alone gives some clue to the operations embraced. Now this society, in 1878, took in a grand total of receipts 275,957*l.* More than half of this represents actual savings of the wage-earning classes. This is only one society, certainly one of the largest, but I know of at least nine others in Sydney alone, all of which are doing a large and increasing business. Look this one fact fairly in the face. Reflect on its significance, and then imagine the absurdity of the cry that the working man in Australia is impoverished and destitute.

Let those interested at home, working men for instance, earning perhaps, in good times, from thirty to forty shillings a week, form their own conclusions from the published rates of wages which I append below. Such facts and figures are worth more than argument, and are incontrovertible.

(From the *Sydney Morning Herald* of August 4th, 1879.)

"LABOUR SUMMARY.

"The following are the prices paid for labour in some of the principal trades of the colony. In compiling the list regard has been had, in setting down the minimum and maximum, to the circumstance that the earnings of some men of more than average competency are

something in excess of the maximum, and that others taking up certain classes of work for which they are not specially fitted, earn less than the minimum. In each of those cases the earnings are exceptional, and it has been ascertained that the rates given below are those paid as a rule:—

"Printing Trade.—Compositors on newspapers, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 1*d.* per 1000; bookwork, 1*s.* per 1000; jobbing, 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* per week.

"Building Trades.—All labour is paid by the day of eight hours. Carpenters, 9*s.* to 11*s.*; stonemasons, 10*s.* to 11*s.*; stonemasons' labourers, 7*s.* to 8*s.*; plasterers, 11*s.* to 12*s.*; plasterers' labourers, 7*s.* to 9*s.*; bricklayers, 10*s.* to 12*s.*; bricklayers' labourers, 7*s.* to 9*s.*; painters, 9*s.* to 10*s.*; joiners, 10*s.* to 11*s.*; plumbers, 8*s.* to 10*s.*; gasfitters, 10*s.*; sawmill hands, 9*d.* to 1*s.* Notwithstanding that the demand for labour in this department of industry has increased, the supply has more than kept pace with it, and is more than ample at the present time. In the plumbing, gasfitting, and brass-finishing branches business has been only moderate during the past month, usually the busiest season.

"Iron Trades.—The following rates are paid by the hour, the men working eight hours a-day, with two breaks in summer and one in winter. Ironturners, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 5½*d.*; engine-fitters, 11*d.* to 1*s.* 4*d.*; shipsmiths, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.*; blacksmiths, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.*; blacksmiths' strikers, 8*d.* to 9¾*d.*; ironmoulders, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*; pattern-makers, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*; boilermakers, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 4*d.*; boilermakers' assistants, 8*d.* to 9*d.*; general labourers in ironworks, 7½*d.* to 10*d.*; engine-drivers, 9¼*d.* to 10*d.*; furnacemen, 10*d.* to 1*s.* 1*d.*; dressers, 8¾*d.* to 11*d.*; machinemen in fitting shop, 10*d.* to 1*s.* 2*d.*

Country blacksmiths receive from 75*l.* to 80*l.* per annum, with rations or board.

"Brass and Copper Trades.—At per hour, the men working eight hours a day, with two breaks in summer and one in winter. Brass-finishers, 11*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*; brass moulders, 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.*; coppersmiths, 1*s.* 1*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* The supply of labour in these trades is fully equal to the demand, and the market is slightly overstocked.

"Brickmakers, 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* to 1*l.* 5*s.* per thousand; pipemakers, 2*l.* 10*s.* per week; potters, 2*l.* 10*s.* ditto.

"Carriage and waggon builders, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* per hour; carriage painters, 10*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* ditto; wheelwrights (country), 3*l.* 10*s.* per week.

"Shipwrights, 9*s.* to 12*s.* a day of eight hours; sawyers in mill, 9*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* per hour.

"Tailors (paid by the piece) can earn about 2*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.* 10*s.* per week; thoroughly efficient and skilled workmen can earn as much as 4*l.*, and in some establishments 4*l.* 10*s.*; shoemakers earn on an average from 1*l.* 15*s.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* per week; sadlers, 2*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* per week; exceptionally good hands, 3*l.* per week.

"Tinsmiths, who work by the piece and by the day, and, in different establishments, from eight to ten hours, can earn from 2*l.* 2*s.* to 3*l.* 3*s.* per week.

"Coopers.—Those who work by the day are paid at the rate of from 8*s.* to 10*s.* per day. By the piece the rate is as follows:—For wine casks, 1*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* per tun; oil casks, 1*l.* ditto; tierces, 3*s.* each for old, 3*s.* 6*d.* for new; hogsheads, 6*s.* ditto; ten-gallon kegs, 2*s.* 9*d.* ditto; five-gallon ditto, 2*s.* to 2*s.* 3*d.* ditto; two-gallon

ditto, 1*s.* 6*d.* ditto; tallow casks, 13*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.* per tun.

"Domestic Servants.—Cooks in private houses, 30*l.* to 65*l.* per annum; cooks in hotels, 45*l.* to 75*l.* ditto; laundresses, 32*l.* to 45*l.* ditto; house and parlourmaids, 26*l.* to 35*l.* ditto; general servants, 26*l.* to 45*l.*; nursemaids, 26*l.* to 35*l.*; grooms and coachmen, 45*l.* to 65*l.*; gardeners, 52*l.* to 65*l.* Thoroughly competent women servants are scarce, and hardly to be obtained even at higher prices than those quoted.

"Station Hands.—Including rations or board: Married couples, 60*l.* to 75*l.* per annum; farm labourers, 30*l.* to 45*l.* ditto; bullock drivers, 40*l.* to 52*l.* ditto; horse-team drivers, 40*l.* to 65*l.* ditto; boundary riders, 40*l.* to 52*l.* ditto; stockmen, 40*l.* to 75*l.* ditto; shepherds, 35*l.* to 40*l.* ditto; roadmakers, 52*l.* to 65*l.* ditto; gardeners, 40*l.* to 52*l.* ditto; useful boys, 16*l.* to 30*l.* ditto.

"Lumpers and Wharf Labourers.—Day work for handling general cargo, 1*s.* per hour; ditto for handling coal, 1*s.* 3*d.* per hour; night work, 1*s.* 6*d.*

"Corporation Labourers.—Working by hour, 8½*d.*; by week of 58 hours, 2*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.*; skilled labourers, 7*s.* to 8*s.* per day; carters (finding horse and cart), 1*s.* 2*d.* per hour.

"The demand for domestic servants of the better class is still maintained, and female domestic servants of the ordinary class readily meet with engagement. In the metal trades—iron and brass founding and fitting—the labour available is somewhat in excess of present requirements. A considerable influx of hands in the building trades within the past two months, although it has not yet had the effect of lowering the wage-

rates, has brought more labour into the market than can be fully employed. A temporary depression in most trades usual at this period of the year has led to the disengagement of a considerable number of hands, but there are reasons justifying the expectation of a revival of business in the approaching spring."

CHAPTER XV.

The railway terminus two miles from the sea—Amazing redtapism—How not to do it in Australia—The railway– Paramatta—Views along the line—John Chinaman—Beauty of the scenery—The great Zigzag—Govett's Leap—The Blue Mountains—Hartley Vale—Dargan's Creek—Mineral wealth of the district—Kerosine shale deposits—The Sugar-loaf estate—Reports by Professor Dawkins and Professor Tate—Openings for capitalists.

HAVING traversed the harbour in one of the innumerable wheezing snorting little steamers that disgrace its waters, the visitor to the New South Wales metropolis is not allowed to rest till he has seen the famous Zigzag. The harbour is the first lion of the Sydney native; the second is the grand engineering work that they call the Zigzag. After these come lesser lions, such as the lovely scenery on the Hawkesbury River, the Fish River caves, the Port Haching waters, the river and valley of the Paterson, and other bits of natural scenery, but the Zigzag is *par excellence*, next to the harbour, the great lion of the country. And here again, there is an excuse for pardonable pride and not a little exultant self-gratulation. The Zigzag, as a mere engineering work, is of sufficient magnitude and excellence to give it a claim to the respectful consideration of the professional student, no less than to the mere sight-seer; but when to its marvellous construction is added the fact that it lies right in the heart

of most magnificent scenery, and affords one of the finest combinations of the wonderful work of man, blended with the noblest natural displays of the wonders of the Creator's hand, it may well stir the curiosity of the most apathetic, and it is certainly well worth a visit.

A trip to the Zigzag includes the scenery of the famous Blue Mountains; it implies a visit to the fairy beauties of the Weatherboard Falls, and the weird fascination of Govett's Leap. Of these anon. On the occasion of my first visit to this pet show of the "Water," I had the advantage of travelling by a free pass, granted to me by the courtesy of the then Commissioner for Railways, Mr. John Rae. Being a sort of special commissioner for my old friend and master's paper, *The Pioneer*, I had made it my business to procure every information relative to the route, and the objects of interest on the way, and I found the officials courteous, sympathetic, and eager to afford me every help I wanted. Mr. Whitton, the Chief Engineer, showed me all the plans, diagrams, and drawings of the line, and primed me full of information on gradients, cuttings, and other engineering mysteries. I need not weary my reader with these, as the probability is he would forget them as rapidly as I did.

There was a keen wind blowing from the mountains, suggestive of sleet and snow; and my old enemy, the rheumatism, warned me by an incessant fusilade of sharp twinges and skirmishing attacks in the joints that a general engagement along the line was imminent, but my curiosity had been so excited by the repeated description of the wonders of this famous traverse of the rocky mountains that barred the way of the first pioneers to the far interior, that I determined to face the caller mountain air, and on a fine sunny

but sharp morning in July I left the city behind me, and started for the Zigzag.

We leave the dingy-looking overcrowded railway station and yard at Redfern—that melancholy evidence of narrow vision and utter lack of prescience and common forethought. It leaves the terminus of a national system of trunk-lines and loop railways, the great arterial feeders of a giant's life, cut off from the heart as it were, beached high and dry like a stranded hulk a short distance from its natural termination, the sea shore; this was a most insane piece of work on the part of the original projectors of the railway policy of the country. The slightest thought, one would imagine, would have sufficed to demonstrate the foolishness of the scheme. With deep water close to the shore and a harbour such as nowhere else exists on this planet, the terminus of the vast prospective railway system of a great nation is left isolated and apart from the shipping and the wharfs by a gap of some two miles of city streets. The city intervenes its breadth between the water and the railway terminus. The accumulated wealth of natural produce of the continent, as also the cargoes of the great fleets employed in supplying the countless wants of Australia from the outside world, must be clumsily and laboriously dragged through the crowded city's streets by the primitive traction of oxen and horses, all for want of the bridging of this little gap. Year after year slips by and nothing is done. Indignant remonstrance, fiery declamation, practical hard-headed demonstration of the awful waste of money, time, and labour, which the continued existence of the gap implies—hot-blooded comments of the press, general chorus of harassed travellers and defrauded merchants, beat like the idle

thundering of the frothy surf against the impassive walls of official routine, departmental phlegm, and executive apathy. For years the promise of every fresh ministry (and changes of ministry are almost as common here as *pronunciamentos* in Chili) has been the bridging of this lamentable gap, and the extension of the railway to the shores of the Pacific, at Circular Quay. For the present it would almost seem as if the omnibus-owning and cab-driving interests, and the rapacity of owners of city properties along the proposed routes were to be allowed to override the express desire of the body of the people. How much longer this anomaly is to be allowed to continue I know not, but the Redfern terminus will long remain the symbol of New South Wales' stupidity. Several schemes have been mooted, any one of which, if carried out, would confer an immense benefit on every individual of the travelling public, while the saving to the shippers, importers, breeders of stock, producers of grain, wool, and other national staples, and to merchants generally, would repay the cost of construction (costly as that must now necessarily be) in probably less than two short years.

After this protest we may continue our trip to the Zigzag. A word of caution to the unwary traveller whose sanguine nature may lead him to neglect the filling of his pocket pistol. He will do well to lay in a modest store of sandwiches and sherry. On the New South Wales railways the refreshments are conspicuous by their absence, and are conducted on a very near approach to Maine Law principles.

The first place of any importance reached is Paramatta. This is at the head of the navigable part of the Paramatta river, and is the oldest town in the colony.

It was formerly the seat of the Governor's residence, and many of the old houses have a quaint, familiar, home-like look. It is a dull, stagnant little town, and its nickname of Sleepy Hollow pretty accurately describes it.

At Paramatta Junction, the Great Southern line branches off to the left, and having now reached Wagga, 304 miles distant from Sydney, will eventually join the Victorian line at Albury, the fruitful vine-growing district on the Murray river. On the right, the Richmond and Windsor line diverges through the bush; and straight on, leading direct to the Blue Mountains, we follow the track of the Great Western line. The carriages are exceedingly comfortable; the permanent way is splendidly ballasted with free-stone; the engines are powerful, some of them of colonial make; and the employés are civility itself.

At New Glasgow we pass a small tweed factory, destined, no doubt, when population increases and abundant labour can be got, to become a busy manufacturing centre of industry, but at present presenting only very modest proportions indeed. Leaving Paramatta, we encounter some rich and lovely orangeries, the golden fruit forming a beautiful contrast to the dark foliage. There are considerable clearings all along the line; but the dense bush yet claims sway over the greater proportion of a vast extent of country. The soil seems poor, and there is but little area of land under crops. Hares are abundant. They are a brown lanky animal, very flavourless, but give excellent coursing. A Mr. Lamb has purchased an estate of 3000 acres, at 1*l.* per acre, and is busy clearing it for a coursing-ground. Coursing has taken a decided hold on the sporting community, and bids fair to

become a very popular pursuit. An annual meeting is held at Bathurst, "the city of the Plains," and great crowds of enthusiastic devotees of the pastime are attracted thither. The dogs might compare favourably with greyhounds at home, and a colonial Master McGrath, or winner of the Waterloo Cup, is as much a possibility as was a champion of the oar in Trickett, or a cricketing team that more than held their own against the cracks of Mother England. We pass a few muddy-tinged streams. What a waste of water here! Irrigation and artificial stores of water are bound to come by-and-by, but not yet, so long as labour is so scarce and at prohibitive rates. The houses you see are very miserable-looking; rooms are small; roofs shingled, or covered with unsightly stringy bark, held in its place with an unhewn *chevaux-de-frise* of heavy logs, morticed together at top by wooden pins. The fields are lined with the inevitable post and rail fence, a rough massive structure, one panel of which would keep an Indian villager in fire-wood for a twelvemonth. They are, however, strong, go as straight as an arrow for miles in places, and no doubt admirably fulfil the object for which they are constructed. At intervals we whisk past a broad bush-road, with unsightly gnarled stumps and charred logs, reminding one of joltings and shakings, and that McAdam has not yet come here. As we glance at the deep ruts in the red clay, we thank our stars for the iron horse, and think gruefully of our ride through the bush into Maryborough.

Now we pass Penrith, a pretty village with neat, weather-board houses, and a very romantic-looking red brick church, reminding one of the village shrines in the dear old country. Through the dense belt of bush,

we get frequent glimpses of the Blue Mountains, stretching like a seemingly impassable barrier directly in front, and far on either hand the hills densely wooded, with here and there a line of weather-beaten crag showing out boldly from the dense mass of sombre vegetation. At the various roadside stations we see numbers of Chinamen; they are neatly dressed in English clothes, and look sleek and contented. Many of them have their hair cut quite *à la militaire*, and some few look like most respectable and prosperous gentlemen. Nothing comes amiss to John. With all his filth, and fondness for opium, and dishes of mysterious concoction, and abhorrence of soap and water, John has many good qualities, and forms a by no means undesirable colonist. As a pedlar he is patient, plodding, and thrifty. As a cook or domestic servant, he is quiet, tractable, and hard-working. As a gardener or miner, or petty shopkeeper he is industrious, clever, frugal, and not exacting in his prices for his wares. Nevertheless he is a sore subject to the working man here. He is an utter abomination to the unionist and publican, and politicians know not what to make of him. In Queensland, the miners have tried to repress him *vi et armis*, and the horizon altogether seems cloudy for John. It is a pity. He supplies a much felt want in that he gives to the country cheap labour to develope its resources, and the working men, who have a monopoly of political power, are determined to have no cheap labour, to suppress immigration, and to institute a reign of "carpet-baggers" and protectionists, which will hamper the wheels of progress, and tie round their own necks the millstone of retrogression and decay.

The working men here, instead of being labourers,

might be employing labour themselves, and getting rich; but they can't see that cheap labour means cheap living, increased production, and augmented wealth.

Now we are crossing the Emu Plains, with the Nepean river winding sluggishly through the fertile reaches. The numerous marks of devastating floods, however, show what this seemingly sluggish stream can become when the water comes sweeping down from the mountains; floods are frequent and most destructive.

On ahead there is a fine viaduct, ending in a gloomy gorge, which opens straight into the mountain; and now we commence the long and laborious ascent, the engine puffing hoarsely, and struggling and straining as it slowly drags our train along. On the plains, green crops smile, and orangeries and vineries give evidence of the fruitfulness of the soil. Houses dot the plain, and cattle and sheep browse quietly on the short brown herbage. It is a lovely and a peaceful spot, and the river does look beautiful as it meanders slowly along. Altogether it is the most peaceful pastoral scene we have yet seen in Australia. Abrupt gorges, with fallen trees spanning them, and rocky hollows now start up on every hand; the face of the hill is scarped sheer off; the bright yellow sandstone glinting in the sun. Magnificent gullies open up, with grey boulders and weather-stained buttresses projecting like the jagged teeth of some old Giant Despair. The water-courses are heaped up pell-mell in a confused mass of drift timber, sleepers, logs, and huge trunks, that have been swept down by the torrents during the late floods. Beneath sleeps the peaceful valley. In the far distance is the swelling coast-line, leagues of bush intervening, and a filmy haze softening every

outline, till the dark mass fades into the misty horizon. We sweep through some heavy cuttings, and go round some sudden curves, and ever and anon a break in the rugged wall of rock reveals fairy-like glimpses of the beautiful panorama of smiling plain, and winding river, and waving forest far below; and we can look back on our track, uncoiling itself like a huge serpent far behind us. The scenery is delightful. This is the first zigzag. It is certainly fine; but I am not yet in hysterical raptures, and the majestic grandeur of the western ghauts above Bombay is much finer.

At the great Zigzag, which we next reach, after a long, uneventful ride through densely wooded mountain scenery, numerous stations being passed, the scenery is unspeakably wild. Looking sheer down, you can see the roof of the pointsman's hut far below, like a toy-house. There are three very fine viaducts, and in some places retaining walls had to be put in, so little room had the engineers in which to work. During the survey, the surveyors had to be let over the cliffs with ropes. Altogether it is a stupendous construction, and worthy of all admiration. The crag scenery reminded me somewhat of the magnificence of the rocks at Loch Coruisk, in the island of Skye. It only wanted flashing cascades and the beauty of falling water to make it equal, in my opinion, to any rock scenery I have ever seen. Farther on we enter the Lithgow Valley, where valuable coal-mines have been discovered, and are being worked. Here I left the train, and coming back in the brake-van of the mineral train, stopped at Perry's comfortable hotel for the night.

The sunset on the mountains was very grand. A dull grey curtain of cloud was coming from the south

and east, gradually forcing the light back, until at length the last red streak sank swiftly behind a peak, and mist and gloom settled on forest and ravine and gorge and peak, wrapping them in weird obscurity.

The night was bitterly cold, and blazing coal fires, with a modest jorum of punch, were most appreciable comforts. Among the famous sights in this neighbourhood are the Weather-board Falls, a succession of magnificent cascades, plunging sheer down an enormous depth into a gulf of verdure far below; and Govett's Leap, another waterfall of surpassing beauty, surrounded by scenery of great grandeur. Govett, according to the popular tradition (this tradition, like a good many others, is strongly believed to be mainly apocryphal), was a famous bushranger, who, escaping from the police, was hotly pursued, till he came to the verge of this tremendous chasm, when, preferring death to capture, he sprang from the giddy height into the abyss below, and gave his name to the locality. Accordingly it was called Govett's Leap, and Govett's Leap it remaineth to this day. We drove—that is myself and a fat Jesuit priest—we drove in a buggy, drawn by a rough-haired, sluggish steed, over six miles of fearful road, by gloomy gorge and bush, and valley and hill, till, after a dull ride through thick scrub, the startling grandeur of the Leap burst like an enchanter's vision on our sight. The view was magnificent. A tremendous subsidence had evidently, in some mighty convulsion of nature, taken place, and the result was a chasm or abyss of appalling depth, and yet of such strange, fantastic beauty, as to call forth unbounded expressions of wonder and delight from the spectator.

To the right, over a mossy, weather-beaten amphitheatre of frowning cliff, a cascade comes leaping and tumbling in broken flakes of spray, reflecting back the rays of the sun in bright prismatic hues; and over the yawning gulf below, a rainbow hangs suspended, looking like the genius of beauty bending in lonely loveliness over the desolation of the scene. Water drips from every overhanging crag—here, in a perfect living torrent of liquid silver, there, in flashing jets of sapphire and pearl, and again in single drops, large, and brilliant as a huge diamond. What a carpet of moss, heath, fern, and grasses! The shapes and colours are lovely in the extreme. The freshness of this living carpet contrasts, too, so beautifully with the rugged, scarred, and weather-beaten rocks. Far below stretches the winding valley, with such lavish wealth of shrub, tree, fern, and evergreen, as tongue could never do justice to.

The valley is bounded on each side by massive frowning walls of rock—perfect battlements of red sandstone. They are not unlike, in contour, to the Salisbury Crags in Edinburgh, although on a grander and more stupendous scale. At our feet, sheer down hundreds of fathoms, the wall of solid rock extends. There is no access this way, and the valley is said to have never felt the tread of human foot. In some parts, in the retiring angles of the mighty battlements, the shade is gloomy, and dark as is the mouth of a vast cavern, and again in parts the white and red cliffs flash back the radiance of the meridian sun with a blaze of light which is positively dazzling to the eye.

The waterfall is very lovely. It looks but two or three feet wide from where we stand, although in

reality of considerable volume, and fully twenty-two feet wide at the point where it projects itself from the cliff. Long before it ends its fearful leap it has become no longer a coherent mass, but filmy wreaths of finest mist. It falls like a fine lace veil, and we can see the scarred face of the cliff peeping forth at intervals like a Gorgon.

Over all there is a sighing, pulsating sound, a subdued and pleasing melody. The air is clear, and the atmosphere keen and bracing. A haze of the loveliest blue rests over all, softening and tinting each harsh outline. The eye is sated with beauty. It is a scene of unequalled grandeur and loveliness. Such a scene as a man may gaze upon but once in a lifetime, and keep fresh in his memory for ever.

While I was drinking in the majestic beauty of the scene my sacerdotal friend drank two bottles of porter, demolished a full-grown fowl, two or three pounds of mutton, a bit of bacon, some unknown quantity of bread and vegetables; and when I left he was only beginning on the cheese.

The railway consists of but a single line of rails. The first station is some 700 feet above sea level. The gradients are in some places 1 in 30, and on to Mount Victoria, or rather to the summit of the Clarence range, some forty-six miles distant from Sydney, there is a steady and continuous rise, till the extreme altitude of 3658 feet is reached. It is a splendid piece of engineering, and no wonder the "Walers" are proud of it. There are dells and dingles of rare beauty, rocky gorges like bits from the Western Highlands of Scotland; but over all, the melancholy solitary bush. It is a perfect ocean of verdure, but all of a sombre and uniform dull green. It

again reminds me of my ride up to the Darling Downs in Queensland.

We seem quite lost in a wilderness of bush. There is an occasional patch of stray green clearing, with the nondescript cabin of the selector; and a good metalled road, with *pucca* bridges, runs alongside the thin white line of rail for some distance. All else is utterly lonely and solitary. We might be in the heart of the Brazilian forests, or amid the desolate wilderness of the Hudson's Bay territories. There seems not a single hoof of cattle or foot of flock. Not even the rapid flight of a bird, or circling swoop of hawk or eagle. It is a dreadful solitude. We are keeping along the ridge, and ever climbing up. Not even the purling of a forest cascade to break the stillness. At intervals you can faintly discern a thin curling haze of smoke, from some lonely hut hid away in some sequestered valley. The chief feeling, however, is that this is perfect solitude—that here we have left the world, and are on the verge of the unknown, and untrodden.

Far away, to the limitless horizon, the endless waves of foliage rise in dense masses, till they melt and become absorbed in the distant haze. The trees are all gnarled, and twisted out of all shape. They stretch their gaunt and leafless arms as if in mute appeal to the wintry elements. Hundreds lie rotting among the boulders and luxuriant ferns. Some have their leafy tops shattered and wrenched off as if by a mighty tempest.

On all the trees nearly there are marks of fires. Near Falcon Bridge, a solitary station on the line, we pass a party of bronzed, hardy bushmen, clearing a bit of ground. Huge log fires are blazing all over the

allotment, and axe and saw are busy at work, reclaiming the soil from the grasp of nature; but the land seems stony and uninviting, and we cannot help wondering at the hope that sees a distant fruition from such an unpromising present.

As we speed swiftly along, billows of shadow and floods of sunshine chase each other over the ridges. We pass gullies of tremendous depth, clothed with gloomy bush, and dank undergrowth. Far off, bluffs and abrupt knolls pierce the sky-line, and then again a dull grey over-hanging sky closes in, imparting a still more funereal hue to the landscape.

Here we pass a herd of goats, the first life we have seen for some time. They are fit denizens of such a rocky wilderness; but we think the long-haired variety might be successfully introduced, and prove a remunerative venture. What a country for red deer, or even hog and spotted deer. Sheep will never utilize these wastes. Here then is the opportunity for the Australian sportsman. The country would make a glorious deer forest. It is cut out for it. The vast extent is so solitary, so still, so death-like in its silence, it seems set apart and consecrated to the genius of solitude.

We are now on the summit of the Blue Mountains. Some bold, abrupt, truncated peaks pierce the sky, and all around lie the tumbling billows of wooded height, and frowning crag, and fathomless ravine. On the very summit of the mountains we come on a fine orchard. It is now the winter season; but during the autumn all the English fruits are grown here, and at Bathurst very fine cherries and other home fruits are both excellent and abundant. Bathurst is a rising town, the centre of a large agricultural

population; fine duck and snipe-shooting can be had near, but in these wilds, only rock wallaby and kangaroos are to be found. Occasionally you may kill a cockatoo, or have a shot if so disposed, at the beautiful Blue Mountain parrot, and in some of the gullies an occasional lyre-bird or pheasant is to be found.

This is now the finest part of the line. There is an all-prevalent tint of deep blue resting on every peak and crag, which admirably justified the appropriateness and aptness of the name the region bears, the Blue Mountains. On a fine clear day every tree stands out, traced with beautiful distinctness against the dark blue background. Far away to the east, on the extreme verge of the horizon, the white sands of Surrey Hills, one of the southern suburbs of Sydney, can be distinctly seen, and at night travellers by the train can sometimes see the lights of the harbour and lighthouse. A keen, bracing, exhilarating air sweeps past us. Bold lines of red cliff jut out from the face of every gorge, and now the guard points out to us the famous Pulpit Hill, where Blaxland, Lawson, and Ranken, the three first pioneers who ever set foot in these solitudes, camped under the shadow of a great tree, and carved their names upon its gnarled stem.

The old guard was very communicative and obliging. He had been a stage-coach driver over the winding bush road, long before the steam whistle had wakened the shrill echoes from the surrounding crags. He pointed out to me place after place with strange-sounding uncouth names, where some solitary "Bush Pub," or roadside accommodation-house, had once stood; and at one point he showed me the ruins of an old stockade, in which travellers had been wont to entrench

themselves at night against the attacks of bushrangers or Aborigines. Thus does history grow.

The scenery here is truly magnificent. The ferns are splendid, and in their varieties multitudinous. Some specimens are over fifteen feet in height, perfect monuments of sylvan loveliness. Yellow and blue and pink flowers, spread a fairy carpet of gorgeous pattern amid the green mosses and dun-coloured herbage, which lies spread over the uneven surface of the gorges. The track winds in and out, threading its way among ravines, and along abrupt ledges and ridges; and in many places it doubles on itself, so that before and behind you can see the steep gradients, deep cuttings, and sudden curves and windings, that you have just passed, or are about to glide over. It is a superb panorama, and you congratulate yourself on having, after all, come to gaze upon the wondrous loveliness of the Blue Mountains and the famous Zigzag.

We stopped for refreshments at Mount Victoria. This is the favourite summer mountain resort of many of the *élite* of Sydney. It is the Simla of New South Wales. A little farther on we came to a small insignificant-looking siding. Down a fearfully steep incline we saw the small waggons descending into Hartley Vale, where are situated the kerosine shale mines. This is an active and important industry, and has a great future before it. The waggons are pulled up by a stationary engine and continuous wire rope; and by an arrangement of skips the small waggons are emptied into the large mineral trucks, when the top of the almost perpendicular incline has been reached.

At a wild bleak part of the view still farther ahead, named Dargan's Creek, the scenery assumes the most wild and fantastic character. The creek has cut its

way through the yielding layers of sandstone, till it now foams and splashes far below, when it is in flood, in a gulf of such gloomy depth and overhanging obscurity, that the eye cannot pierce the darkness of the profundity beneath. Great stacks of some of the harder layers of stone still stand, showing what the original level of the country must have been. These curious-looking monuments of a former state of things rise at frequent intervals down the course of the creek, looking like giant vedettes ranged in skirmishing array, or like the last grim sentinels standing with defiant front when all the imposing array of their mighty army has been vanquished and melted beneath the resistless onslaught of all-conquering time. All these pinnacles are more or less conical, bulging out, in some cases, at the top. Many of them look like great petrified mushrooms, and have a peculiarly quaint appearance.

The rock all over this country is permeated with bands of ironstone, and much mineral wealth lies sealed up in every rocky ravine and gorge, waiting the touch of those modern magicians, labour and capital, to unfold their treasures. Already coal, iron, kerosine shale, fire-clay, and other valuable minerals, are successfully worked, and evidences of lead, antimony, and even silver, are not absent. Of course nearly all the country has been snapped up, and acquired by capitalists long ago. It may probably yet form the Black Country of Australia.

Already the kerosine shale, better known, perhaps, to home readers as Boghead Cannel, is being exported to England for the purpose of being used in the manufacture of gas. It fetches about 4*l.* per ton. For years it has been used in the various colonial gas

works, to improve the illuminating powers of the gas, and has also been exported to China, California, and other foreign parts. These mines belong to what is known as The New South Wales Shale and Oil Company, who have very large works established about three miles from Sydney, for the manufacture of illuminating and lubricating oils, kerosine, and other shale products. A protective tariff of threepence per gallon on American oil gives rather an advantage to the colonial product. The oil is a great favourite with merchants and consumers, in consequence of the highness of its flashing test, and its general excellence.

In the same district, and nearer to the Mount Victoria railway station, being only two and a half miles distant, is another property, underlying what is known as the sugar-loaf mountain, which has been thoroughly prospected and tested; and the results of the preliminary surveys and tests give evidence that a veritable mine of wealth here lies concealed. It belongs to Dr. W. F. Mackenzie, of Sydney. The property comprises about 420 acres, and the cannel is supposed to underlie about 400 acres of the property. To give some idea of the future that lies before this district, it may interest many, who are casting their attention to Australia as a field for profitable investments, if I give the opinion of a well-known expert on this subject. I have seen a report on this property, written by Professor W. B. Dawkins, of Owen's College, Manchester, from which I extract the following:—

"On a minute examination I find that the stratum of cannel may be traced on all the sides of the precipitous mountains, except the south, where it is obscured by extensive landslips, which prevent absolute certainty as to the presence, on that side, of so variable

a mineral. I believe it to be there. It is geologically identical with the adjacent deposit at Hartley, which has been worked for several years for the sake of the kerosine oil, as well as for gas-making purposes. The quantity of cannel in the property is as follows :—

"Average thickness of cannel (best), 12 inches. Average of tops and bottoms, 5 inches.

"These yield—taking the average specific gravity at 1·2 and the area at 400 acres—respectively, 583,392 and 117,774 tons."

It needs little calculation to find out what an immensely valuable industry might here be initiated. This is only one other instance—out of many which I have outlined in this volume—of the great field which lies open in New South Wales for the remunerative investment of capital in many ways.

Mexicans, Peruvians, Egyptians, Spaniards, Erie Rings, *et hoc genus omne*, have swallowed already far too much of solid English gold. It is high time capitalists turned their attention to

"Fresh woods and pastures new."

While on the subject of shale, there is yet another property, further along the line, at Wallerawang, the central station in all this rich tumbled country of mineral wealth, which merits notice. It lies about twenty-eight miles to the west of Mount Victoria, about one mile from the main western line, and some 100 feet above its level. Here again we see the same formation. "Bottled sunshine" here lies hid by the ton. On one property of 2000 acres, belonging also to Dr. Mackenzie, there is a proved deposit of shale, exactly corresponding, in all chemical constituents, to the rich Boghead cannel of Bathgate in Scotland.

Professor A. Norman Tate, of Liverpool, tested specimens from this deposit, and in a certificate, which I have seen, he states that it yielded at the rate of 17,000 cubic feet of gas to the ton, of an illuminating power equal to thirty-six candles. In close contiguity, and on the same property, ironstone and coal are found in rich profusion. It needs but little prescience to picture the future of such a magnificently endowed territory. Under wise and liberal dispositions, perhaps, I may yet live to witness this tract of country the scene of clanging workshops, busy factories, reticulating tramways, and all the accompaniments of a mighty mineral industry, in full swing. This district is but the counterpart of others in the colony, where other natural products are waiting development, to make New South Wales one of the foremost manufacturing countries in the world.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sporting proclivities—Gambling and betting—Lord Harris and the Cricketing Association of New South Wales—Colonial crowds—A public holiday—Bookmakers, the vultures of society—Their influence subversive of true sport—A water party on the harbour—Our host and hostess—Australian ladies—Less constraint and conventionality than in England—Precocity of the girls—Beauty of the harbour—Monman's Bay—A merry party—The eight-oar race between the rival colonies—Account of the race between Trickett and Rush for the championship of the world.

Our Cornstalk cousins are decidedly a sport-loving race. The grand old games of England have struck root in a congenial soil at the Antipodes, and all manly sports and athletic exercises here flourish with a vigour, which is not excelled even by the parent stock. In cricket and aquatics they have amply proved their incontestable excellence, as the names of Trickett, and the Australian eleven who proved their mettle against English cricketers, can testify. Nearly all sports, however, are tinctured with the fatal vice of gambling and betting. Especially is this the case on the turf. Australian race-horses are a magnificent breed of animals; but the baleful influence of the Ring shadows every race-course in Australia. The late popular governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, by his example and patronage did much to bring the turf

into favour and elevate the tone of the sport; but those ruffianly book-makers are the bane of the pastime, and that they abound in such hateful numbers is both proof of the existence of the gambling spirit referred to, and a fruitful cause of its spread and continuance.

It is no uncommon thing in provincial towns to find small coteries of confirmed gamblers who, night after night, sit over the dice till dawn, and you may come upon couples slinking into the early bars to quaff their matutinal draught of rum and milk, to steady their nerves after a night's dicing and cards.

Many clerks in offices and banks regularly make their books on the races, and the gambling spirit is not confined to horse-races. The insidious poison blights with its presence almost every department of sport. The disgraceful scene at the match between Lord Harris' eleven and the Colonial team at Sydney, which has now become historical, owed its origin to the presence of professional betting men in the enclosure, which was supposed to be set apart exclusively for the use of the members of the Cricketing Association of New South Wales. I was witness of that disgraceful scene, and I must bear testimony to the deep-seated and universal feeling of shame and humiliation which pervaded the breast of every true sportsman in the assemblage. The one prevalent feeling was, "What will they think of us in England?" Every apology that could be thought of, every *amende* that could be given was made to the visiting team, and I think it was, perhaps, bad taste in Lord Harris to make the public charge he did, after the sorrow and regret of the whole community had been tendered to him and accepted by him. The *fons et origo* of the whole

scandal was the presence of these vultures of the Ring in the cricket pavilion. The crowd that afterwards invaded the ground were composed almost entirely of the scoundrelly larrikins. That no policemen were there, at least not in sufficient numbers to clear the ground, was only an evidence how little their presence in ordinary circumstances is needed. A colonial crowd is, indeed, a miracle of orderliness and good-nature. I have seen elections, races, regattas, coursing matches, football and cricket contests, and public gatherings for every conceivable purpose, and I record my deliberate conviction that the demeanour of an Australian crowd will compare favourably with that of any kindred gathering in any part of the world.

It has been said that we northerners do not know how to enjoy ourselves. If the author of that idea could only see a Sydney crowd out for a holiday, he would certainly come to the conclusion that the Southern Briton most thoroughly knows how to make the best of a holiday. A New South Wales *fête* day would vie in gaiety with an Italian Carnival or a Hindoo *mela*. Family groups pour out of the city in every variety of vehicle, and the various roads diverging from the city look each like a miniature Epsom road on the great Derby Day. All the holiday-makers are well clad. Hampers of viands and drinkables are provided in lavish abundance. All is jollity, mirth, and good-humour, and to the credit of the populace, be it said, little drunkenness is seen. All seem possessed of plenty of money to spend, and they spend it freely. There are very few walking parties. Multitudes go for a day on the waters of the beautiful harbour; hundreds ride or drive to the various sea-side and suburban resorts. If Randwick Races be the scene of carnival,

thousands repair to the noble course; but thousands more would flock thither if the brassy-throated vulture class were driven from the scene. Many of these are of the lowest type of humanity. They haunt the purlieus of low public-houses, and are generally in league with the low betting publicans. Many of them are the consorts of abandoned women, and act as jackals to those unfortunate pariahs of society. When a lucky digger, a drover, a station overseer, a bush hand, or purchaser, a new comer, with a few spare notes in his possession, or a foolish young squatter with more cash than brains comes to town, these hyenas mark him down at once. Woe betide him if he gets within their clutches! They will strip him as clean as a sausage-skin. They are utterly devoid of pity.

The book-maker, or professional betting man, from the most lenient point of view, lives on a prevalent vice. He appeals to a vicious want, and inhaling a vicious atmosphere, and begirt by vicious surroundings, men do not generally look for the virtues of a Bayard among the blatant foul-mouthed slaves of the Ring. As one of the ignoble fraternity forcibly put it to a friend of mine, on one occasion, in a weak moment of cynical candour, they live by "Bestin." "Bestin is our game, sir," said the broken-nosed "sport." "Everybody else tries to 'best' us, and so we try to 'best' everybody at their own game." This is probably the most favourable point of view in which the book-makers' ignoble vocation can be looked at.

It's a sorry satire on our boasted civilization, and loudly proclaimed love of, and interest in honest, manly sport, as a community at large, to see so many of these jackals thriving amongst us. They taint every sport with their presence. Their loud, strident voices

and brazen effrontery carry them everywhere. We even, on occasions, see them hobnobbing at the same table with Members of Parliament and of the learned professions, and responding at public dinners to the various toasts. If gentlemen who wish to bet would only bet with gentlemen, the area of operations of the blatant book-maker would be much circumscribed.

I have little doubt in my own mind that many of the best sportsmen and truest lovers of honest pastime abstain from taking an active participation in organizing public amusements, simply because the objectionable betting element is so strongly represented. Thus, as in politics, so in sport, second-rate busybodies and third-rate nonentities become the representative men. I am convinced more men of means would go in for keeping a horse that they could enter once a year for their local races if they felt secure against the vulgar familiarity, the obtrusive rascality, and the vile machinations of the betting men.

But so it is, and year by year racing gets more and more into the hands of sporting publicans, horsey butchers, and seedy characters of all sorts, and gentlemen, owners, breeders, and *bonâ-fide* sportsmen get more and more heavily handicapped. So it happens that gate-money becomes the paramount object in a race meet. The primary object of horse-racing—improvement in the breed of racers—becomes more and more a matter of secondary moment.

The existence of the magnificent harbour gives to the Sydney holiday-maker exceptional facilities for a day's rare enjoyment, such as are perhaps nowhere enjoyed in such perfection in any other port in the world. One of these rare water-parties yet lives in my memory. It was on the occasion of the first inter-

colonial eight-oar race ever rowed on the waters of Port Jackson. The contest was for the aquatic supremacy between Victoria and New South Wales.

I was the guest of a couple, whose hospitality, courtesy, and native kindliness of disposition endear them to a large circle of acquaintances. They are a good type of the higher class of colonists. Native Australians both, education and refinement have taught them that the mere acquisition of wealth is not the "be all, and end all," of existence. Our host was devotedly attached to the country of his birth, and having a place in the councils of the nation, he makes his parliamentary position the means of stirring to advance the true progress of his country in all that will make her really and practically a great and progressive nation. Belonging to one of the learned professions, he fully recognizes the dignity of his position, and if we had more men of his stamp, taking an active and intelligent part in public life, we would not hear so much of the rampant jobbery and widespread corruption which generally follows when the reins of power are committed to the hands of needy, impecunious, professional place-hunters, and unscrupulous selfish politicians, whose first ambition is to aggrandize themselves, feather their own nests at the expense of the public, and legislate in the interests of the class that clamour the loudest, subordinating great questions of state to the vulgar outcry of the mob.

Our hostess is a specimen of the rare womanly beauty which ripens into such perfection beneath the ardent Australian sun. Indeed the traveller cannot fail to be struck with the general appearance of the Australian women. I think they possess greater charms of face and figure, and a more delicate, refined style of

beauty, as a rule, than their northern sisters. The Australian-born woman is generally tall, well proportined, agile, lithe of limb, and has all her features cut in a classic mould of rather a Grecian or aristocratic type. In plain words, I think Australian women are more generally pleasing, more lovely in feature and more graceful in figure, than English women. The climate has doubtless much to do with this, but beauty is not by any means confined to the wealthier classes. The free out-of-door life, the abundant fare, the freedom from many foolish kinds of conventionality which handicap the English girl, all go in favour of the Australian. One is surprised to find so many really beautiful faces and faultless figures, in all ranks; and the observant student of "the human form divine" must come to the conclusion, that so far as outward beauty is concerned, the race has not deteriorated by its transplantation to the antipodes. The Australian, however, must strike her flag to the fresh rosy cheeks and ruddy warm complexions of the village beauties of the old country. Clear complexions are not the strong point of the Australian belles.

Far more freedom is accorded to Australian girls than mothers in England would ordinarily think consistent with propriety. The Australian beauty is quite able to hold her own in railway, omnibus, or steamboat. It is not considered at all uncommon or remarkable to see her go shopping, travelling, or visiting, without male escort or female chaperone. Whether the girls are improved by this, or the reverse, may be a moot point; opinions vary. Australians are certainly quick, intelligent, self-reliant. Their detractors, who may not have had the same degree of liberty accorded them in their own youth, will occasionally hint that

they are just a little too strong-minded, impulsive, forward, and free spoken. Let us assume that this is pure jealousy.

The curled darlings of the old country, in making advances, therefore, to the Australian blonde or brunette, frequently find themselves taken rather at a disadvantage. Their armoury of vapid commonplaces about the weather and such like stock topics are not unfrequently found insufficient to withstand the keen incisive torrent of sound sensible talk, showered on them by the self-possessed creature, whom in their sublime altitude of self-worship, they propose to patronize. The youth of this stamp will be fortunate if he do not find some patent foible of his own mercilessly exposed, and the weak points of his armour pierced by the shafts of a quick-witted raillery. The Australian belle is not above the blandishments of flattery, and a little scandal is seldom disagreeable to the female mind, but the ambitious youth who would make a good impression must address his partner as if she had brains in her head.

My business, perhaps my inclinings, have brought me more in contact with the male Australian than with the gentler sex, and I have seen more of the public than the domestic life of this vigorous young nation, but certainly (and now I write for my Anglo-Indian friends) if every neighbourhood around Sydney contains such a collection of truly charming families and neighbourly people as that suburb where I have the good fortune to reside, I would far prefer to spend my days here, than in the censorious, artificial, conventional, and cold formal atmosphere of an English provincial town. But perhaps the Hindoo proverb contains the truth, *Ap Bhula to jaggat*

Bhula. "If thou art good, thy neighbourhood will be good also."

To return to our picnic. We had provided for our use a speedy little steam-launch. It was a cold morning, and great-coats, ulsters, wraps, cloaks, and warm coverings of all sorts were in request. We steamed gaily away from the crowded wharf. There was none of that cold, formal restraint which characterizes a mixed party in England. Merriment and good-humour were the prevailing features. By mid-day we had steamed into the sheltered recesses of Mossman's Bay. We disembarked at a primitive landing-place, and spread out the snowy cloth in a sheltered nook carpeted with the living greenery of the crisp, fresh-looking *cooch* grass. The genius who presided over the commissariat had had imperial ideas of hospitality, and while a fire was lighted, on which to boil the "Billy of tea" which is an indispensable adjunct to every Australian picnic, we hastily disinterred from their swathings of paper and straw the multitude of good things which had been provided. After lunch, we wandered along the sides of the lovely gorge, and then again embarked and steamed off to witness the race, towards which point now numberless steamers, row-boats, yachts, sailing-skiffs, and pleasure-boats of all descriptions were rapidly working their way.

Nothing can exceed the zeal of young Australia for its sports, and this is well so long as sport does not stifle all taste for higher pursuits. There is just a danger of this, and we may even say a great danger, which is even now apparent. The gladiators of the intellectual arena are not greeted with the applause of the multitude, as are the bowlers, batsmen, scullers,

runners, and athletes, who carry off the laurels in the Isthmian games Still the country is young, and let us hope that mental culture will in time become more general and popular.

The race of which I have to tell was rowed over the champion course, on Saturday, the 30th of June, 1877, shortly after my arrival in the colonies.

From earliest dawn, all dressed in gala costume, and well supplied with creature-comforts, the population of the city and suburbs had turned out *en masse* to witness the race. By mid-day, most of the shops were shut, and a steady exodus set in from the excited city. Trains densely packed with eager passengers shot swiftly along the line; omnibusses, parcel-delivery vans, waggonettes, cabs, in fact every description of vehicle rolled merrily over the roads, conveying their excited occupants to the scene of the contest. Steamers snorted and puffed and shrieked as they ploughed their way to Gladesville and other spots on the shore, bearing dense crowds of ardent partisans of the two men of the day, to witness from the cliffs and heights the grand match for the championship of the world.

The busy steamers threading their tortuous way along, the immense crowds fringing the rocky shores, and the countless fleet of boats and skiffs that fleck the water, crossing and recrossing, gliding here and dashing there,—a most wonderful panorama of ever-changing form and colour, a most magnificent and memorable sight.

Blue, being Trickett's colour, seemed universally worn. Steamers flaunted it from mast-head and prow. Row-boats showed some fluttering fragment as they danced along. In the streets it seemed to be the pre-

vailing colour. Horses wore rosettes of it; the very whips were decorated with it. The more modest green of Rush seemed at a discount; but many hearts in the crowd beat warmly for him, and in every mind there was a conviction, that if indomitable pluck, and honest, manly emulation could wrest the coveted honour from its popular possessor, Rush of all men was the man to make a gallant struggle. Hen and Chicken Bay lay before us, as calm as a mill-pond and polished as a mirror; the bold masses of bush were reflected in its clear, still bosom, and with its air of perfect stillness and repose it proved a most marked and striking contrast to the thronged and agitated waters of the mid passage and to the eager, tumultuous, ever-moving, swaying crowds, that now clustered thick on every point and occupied every available foothold on the densely-populous shores. The sun had now burst from his canopy of cloud, and, as if sharing in the general excitement, flashed his penetrating rays on bush and rock, and dancing wave, till the sheen on the water was like a vast sheet of burnished silver, flashing from its glittering surface the concentrated rays of many moons. The scene was indeed a lovely one. The arrangements were most excellent. There was no confusion; the course was kept clear from first to last, and no accident occurred to mar the pleasure of the day.

By half-past three the course was all clear, and the numerous fleet of steamers had taken up their positions, being stationed on both sides of the rowing course, athwart the stream. The excitement had now reached a frantic height.

There was a hush and lull of expectancy. A six-oar now pulled slowly from the landing-stage, pro-

ceeding onwards in front of the Governor's barge, that genial and popular sportsman[1] having been loudly cheered as he proceeded up the river. In the stern of the boat lay Rush's slender craft, and the gallant Irishman himself could be seen standing up in the middle of the boat, leisurely divesting himself of his outer garments.

Next, Trickett, seated in his fairy-looking racing skiff, emerged into view from behind Bowden's Wharf. His advent was the signal for a roar of welcome, and queries were showered from countless lips.

For the moment the two men were the cynosure of every eye—the observed of all observers. Rush soon took his seat in his boat, and pulled slowly and steadily forward to meet his formidable antagonist.

The two competitors quickly neared each other. We could see the drops of water flashing from their polished oars like beads of liquid silver. It was understood they were to start by mutual arrangement.

After a few preliminary evolutions, as if actuated by one impulse, both bounded forward like

"An unbroken steed when first he feels the rein,"

or like greyhounds dashing from the slips. "They're off at last!" "Splendid start!" "Rush leads!" are now the cries. Men hurry backwards and forwards. There was a mighty swaying and surging, and a great commotion amongst the crowds on the steamers.

It was true—Rush was leading, and, pulling with a quick, powerful stroke of forty-two to the minute, seemed to be increasing his distance. Both men were not yet settled to their work, and threw up con-

[1] Sir Hercules Robinson, G.C.M.G.

siderable spray. Rush looked the more bulky and the stronger of the two, but his action seemed somewhat strained, and had not the graceful ease of his lithe antagonist. Both men were now settling down, and already the fleet of steamers was in motion; and while volumes of smoke mingled with the escape steam, they bore swiftly down in pursuit of the tiny craft on which all eyes of that vast multitude were fixed.

Passing Uhr's Point, Rush led by a clear boat's length; nearing Blaxland's Point, and opposite Concord, he had somewhat increased his lead. Trickett now put on a spurt, and, amid enthusiastic cheers, waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and the most frantic excitement, began to overhaul his plucky opponent. Off Bottle Point the boats were close together, so close that we feared the oars must clash. This was the most madly-exciting moment of the race. The boats seemed bounding through the water. The men strained every nerve, and with each muscle tense and strung, eyes set, teeth clenched, and hearts beating with fierce emulation, they lifted the boats bodily forward at every stroke. It was now a struggle in dead earnest, and for several seconds the boats lapped and lapped each other—now one gaining a few inches, and now again receding. Steadily, however, the "Cornstalk" kept creeping up, and the Clarence River man kept getting, inch by inch, a rearward position. Round the bend the boats were abreast of each other, and, amid the most frantic cries on the part of the crowd, Trickett shot ahead, and from that moment he was again the secure Rowing Champion of the World.

With steady, bull-dog tenacity, however, the Australian representative of Green Erin struggled on. He

rowed most gamely and manfully throughout. The race was now virtually Trickett's, who increased his lead until, when nearing the Rowing Club, he must have been eight lengths ahead.

Here he paused a moment to wave his hand to his enthusiastic admirers, who thronged the shore in countless numbers. Again the long, lithe, muscular arms sent the merry blades flashing through the water, the defeated, but dogged and determined, pursuer pulling gamely and steadily in the wake.

A perfect ovation now greeted Trickett. Men's minds seemed altogether off their balance; the roar of the cheering was like the noise of many waters. The air was loaded with clamorous bursts of applause, that echoed and re-echoed far down the river.

Pigeons wheeled round in mazy gyrations, bearing news of the issue of the contest to anxiously-expectant friends at a distance. Gun and pistol shots added their din to the mixed medley of sound. Amid cries, shouts, ringing cheers, waving of flags, hats, and handkerchiefs, and a culmination of excitement quite without a parallel in the history of the colony, and utterly indescribable in words, Trickett flashed past the judge's post.

So ended the famous boat-race. Long may the breed of men like Trickett and Rush continue. Against honesty and straightforwardness like theirs the machinations of the Ring are powerless. Long may the love of honest, hearty, manly sport flourish in Australia. May the cool resolution, the generous rivalry, the quick resource, the dogged determination, and the indomitable pluck that are the heritage of our race and the outcome of all manly sports and pastimes, follow the brave lads of Australia into the world.

CHAPTER XVII.

An Easter outing in the Antipodes—Arrangements for the party—Our comrades and their appearance—The start—We steam round to Port Hacking—Our camp—A damper—A bad night—Dawn in Australia—After Uallaby—A gem in the forest—A pull up the river—Splendid scenery—The lyre bird—A camp feast—Hooked through the hand—Disembarkation.

I HAVE said enough, I think, to show folk at home that their cousins in the Antipodes have not degenerated so far as manly sports are concerned. Nor are field-sports ignored. On the contrary, limited as have been the winged and four-footed quarry hitherto for the votaries of St. Hubert and Nimrod, the capacities of Australia for field-sports are even now on the increase.

I have mentioned hares as being now commonly met with in the great Western Plains, and coursing is becoming quite a popular pastime. In some parts of Australia, happily not yet in New South Wales, rabbits have so increased as to be an unmitigated pest to farmers and graziers. Marsupials of all kinds abound. Bush turkeys, emus, pigeons, wild ducks, wild geese, cockatoos, black swans, quail, lyre birds, and numerous other winged beasts, afford ample practice for the gun of the enthusiastic sportsman, and both river and sea, as I will further show in another chapter, afford infinite means of diversion for disciples of the gentle Isaac

Walton. When a holiday comes round, therefore, it is customary for several young fellows of kindred tastes in Sydney, to club together, and, hiring a launch, or borrowing a boat, they betake them to one of the many lovely spots in the vicinity of the metropolis, where fishing and shooting can both be indulged in to their hearts' content. The shooting is not so abundant and excellent as the fishing, but enough game can generally be found, to tempt the enthusiastic possessor of a gun, to carry it with him on his annual excursion.

Easter in Australia generally falls about the time of the year when the days are long, and the nights are cool. I was fortunate enough on one occasion to form one of a very jovial party, the counterpart of hundreds of similar little combinations, to spend the Easter holidays, and I cannot do better, I think, than transcribe for the home reader my experiences as I detailed them for some friendly readers in Calcutta. It will give friends at home a pretty fair idea of how the young sportsmen of Australia spend a holiday.

Some days before the holidays a trusty friend hinted to me that I should be welcome if I would consent to join himself and a party of friends. I asked him where they were going.

"Oh!" said he, "we're going to have a regular camp;[1] we've got a steam-launch and a boat, and intend going to Port Hacking to have some shooting, fishing, and general diversion."

Now, I had camped out a good deal in my time. I knew what it involved; and, remembering my corpulent frame and rheumatic joints, I was rather averse

[1] "Camp" is the invariable colonial phrase used to describe an excursion of any sort. To go a-fishing, or a-shooting, is "*to camp out.*"

to the idea of roughing it, as I knew many enthusiastic young Australians were in the habit of doing, when they went out on an expedition of the nature proposed by my friend. I am just as fond of sport as most men, and, perhaps, have had as large an experience as the majority of my Australian acquaintance. Grouse shooting, partridge shooting, black-cock shooting, I have had. Salmon fishing in the bonny Scottish rivers, in the lovely voes of Shetland, and in the deep blue waters of the Western Islands, I have enjoyed with a delicious zest; but I never found warm dry clothing, comfortable quarters, and good cookery detract from, but rather intensify the sport, whatever it may have been. In New Zealand I have been out shooting wild cattle on the back ranges, spearing eels with the Maories, and potting Paradise ducks, and other winged and web-footed birds on the flax-fringed tarns of Canterbury. But I never found a nice tent and warm blue blankets to be at all a bad accessory to one's sport. After a weary day's waiting in the thick *sal* jungle of India, when each rustle made my heart beat high with excitement, as I looked for the expected leopard or lordly stag; or at the end of a long beat through tangled bamboo or elephant grass, as the stately line of elephants bore majestically down on the slouching tiger, the savage rhinoceros, or the ponderous buffalo; a refresher in the shape of an iced hock and seltzer, a sparkling draught of champagne or claret cup, or a long pull at refreshing brandy and soda, has never detracted from the enjoyment of the sport pure and simple, and, therefore, I asked my friend what sort of a camp they were going to have.

Now he was the sort of man who cares not a button so long as there's plenty of wallaby to be shot

or schnapper to be hooked, and even when he said that everything was to be quite on a scale of oriental magnificence in fact, I still felt rather dubious, and I said, "Well, we can go and see G.!" "All right," said A., and off we went. My first impressions of G. were decidedly flattering to that excellent fellow, and when we had visited his well-stocked cellar, discussed a flagon of delicious Australian wine, and G. had told me he was to take a tent and I might have a share of it, I began to think it might not be a bad thing after all to have an outing at Easter.

In addition to the steam-launch there were to be two or three tents, two aborigines to assist the *chef de cuisine*, and the party was to be limited to twenty. For their sustenance and delectation a quarter of an ox, a live sheep, a colossal ham, three barrels of beer, flour, potatoes, tomatoes, cabbages, parsnips, carrots, cheese, bread, condiments, mushrooms, butter, and all the "materials" for punch, not forgetting even the lemons, and last, but not least, an enormous plum-pudding, were to be provided. Ere he had half finished his tempting category my last remaining scruple had vanished, and even for a time, I must confess with a blush, I forgot all about the wallaby and the fishing. However, we discussed another flagon, and then arranged for a muster, and talked over every requisite detail. Our luggage was to be sent down from G.'s, and it was finally decided that the party should meet at Botany, at the Sir Joseph Bank's Hotel, on the Thursday night.

Thursday evening saw A. and self stowed on the box seat of the Botany 'bus. We had a pleasant ride, a comfortable tea-dinner with our hostess and one fair ruddy damsel, several smokes and shandygaffs, a

stroll through the garden, and a meeting with several old friends, until the approach of ten o'clock. About that time the company began to roll up; but, heavens, what a change! In place of the shining beavers and natty habiliments of every-day city life, we had now the most incongruous assemblage of head-pieces that ever survived a life of adventure and years of wear. There were slouching sombreros, dilapidated wide-awakes, moth-eaten fur caps, cricket caps, and even red night-caps. The clothes would have shamed rag fair. Some wore jumpers, guernseys, and tatterdemalion jackets. The continuations were shabby to a degree, and the shoes would have been spurned by a Parisian *chiffonier*. Our captain introduced us to each other, drew us up in line, called the roll, made us a speech, and then we adjourned to the bar and underwent the agony of tambaroora for drinks.

A rich Milesian brogue betrayed the presence of one hardy son of Erin, while a polished enunciation and rather formal manner evidenced that we had another pedagogue in our midst, who, however, turned out to be a king of a fellow, and a mighty trencherman. Judging from his revolver practice subsequently he was well qualified to "teach the young idea how to *shoot*." Representing the banking interest we had old Father Christmas, who fully sustained the jolly associations connected with his name, and of the others I may speak anon.

A. and I had been fortunate enough to secure a bed, but the others were relegated to the dim obscurity of the long-room, where a few venturesome but enthusiastic votaries of the noble game of whist essayed a rubber amid a Babel of sound, and a perfect avalanche of practical jokes; while the piano, under the nimble

fingers of a musical member of the party, emitted strains of a decidedly Bacchanalian character; and, under the combined distraction, the whist-players had to succumb. Very few that night slept the sleep of the just, and the noisy clamour of the geese in the court-yard was welcomed as a glad heralding of the advent of day.

It was a dull, gloomy morning; but by ten o'clock we had accomplished a safe embarkation. The whistle emitted a shrill scream as Davey (the engineer) turned on steam; and with the angular, dusky figure of Black Bob, a half-caste and our captain for the nonce, standing tall, erect, and stern, at the wheel, we steamed rapidly off in the direction of Botany Heads. Nearing the Heads the scene was a striking one. Over all the land brooded a dark sombre mass of watery-charged cloud, while far out to sea the sun was brightly shining, tipping with a silvery sheen the long rolling undulations that came majestically on to break in fleecy heaps upon the frowning rocks that guard the coast. Shadows chased each other over the bounding billows, and in the nooks and crevices of the shore there rested a thin filmy haze, through which one could see delicate ferns and clustering shrubs nodding to the toying breeze, and sparkling with pearly dew, as ever and anon an inquisitive sunbeam darted through the haze.

The sporting ardour of K. was no longer to be controlled. Producing an ancient revolver, with a huge box of cartridges, and another of percussion caps, he loaded his weapon in solemn silence; then espying a sea-gull several furlongs off, he blazed off six barrels in rapid succession, and seemed astonished that the sea bird still sailed on in unruffled serenity. Failing to

bring down the distant gull, he kept up an incessant bombardment on the rocks, close to which we were now steaming, and seemed as happy in hearing the continuous pop pop of his miserable fire-arm as the proverbial tinker's dog. The muzzle pointed at each of our heads with most just impartiality, until some beneficent individual, *pro bono publico*, quietly abstracted the cartridges, in an unguarded moment on K.'s part, whose pistol was thenceforth dumb, and the disappointed artillerist took to drowning his sorrows in the flowing bowl.

The hardy Norseman and a few others now began to exhibit symptoms of *mal de mer*. Their jokes grew milder as their complexions more and more assimilated to the colour of the deep green sea. Those of us who resisted had a double reward.

The rock scenery we were now passing was lovely in the extreme. There Currunulla beach stretched out its glistening bars of gold, on which the white breakers broke with a booming roar; and in front we could see Port Hacking opening out before us; a small, low, mangrove-covered island in the foreground; to the right a bold headland with two snowy tents close to the beach, dark masses of verdure picked out, with white "lillie-pillie" blossom; and far away to the south the undulations of the coast gradually fading in the dim haze of the distance. The sail up the river was truly beautiful. We had to pursue a tortuous track to keep the channel, and ever and anon a deep sequestered bay, or winding inlet, would open up, disclosing little picture gems in a setting of grey rock, glistening sand, and melancholy sombre bush. About noon we drew up at our point of disembarkation. There was a rude little wharf, with a deep overhanging

rock crowned by a gnarled, twisted, old fig-tree, and under its shade we set up our kitchen and unpacked our goods. We were moored in the bight of a lovely amphitheatre of verdure-clad hills, with here and there a rugged rock showing his weather-beaten scarred face from among the surrounding foliage. In one corner a silvery cascade danced merrily from a cleft ravine and glittered gaily in the sunshine, while all round the shore was an encircling belt of oysters, forming a living *chevaux de frise* to resist the landing of any incautious bather. It was a spot of rare sylvan beauty; a fairy picture of forest, rock, and limpid wave; and so far as evidences of man's intrusions went, save our own noisy party, we might have been countless leagues from the busy hum of the thronged metropolis.

The day was very warm, close, and sultry, but ominous clouds hung about, threatening rain. While some proceeded to set the tents, others scaled the heights, and hurled down withered branches and dead logs for the camp fire, and, under the energetic action of our caterer and captain, we were soon all squatted on improvised seats of rock and log, enjoying our first meal in camp. After breakfast, several betook them to the piscatory art, while six or seven of us got into the boat and pulled over for the farther shore, intending to beat for wallaby, or, at the very least, secure a stray parrot or wonga pigeon for the pot. Alas! we had not proceeded half-way ere a perfect torrent came down on us from a passing thunder-cloud. *Sacrebleu!* how it pumped on us! We got hastily ashore and cowered under an o'er-beetling rock, while the rain came down mercilessly. I thought of my beautiful gun getting horribly wet; I conjured up a vision of

wet clothes, wet blankets, and wet feet, remembered my rheumatics, and shuddered. However, there was no help for it. It did not look like clearing, so we buckled our belts, set our "stout hearts to a very stey brae," and sturdily stumped it up the hill amid rocks, ferns, lovely wild flowers, prickly shrubs, embracing creepers, and over all the pelting, persistent rain. Long ere we reached the summit of the craggy steep, we were squeezing water from our saturated boots at every step. The rain now abated somewhat, and finally ceased, but soon a new affliction we were doomed to experience. We seemed to have got into the very nursery and head-quarters of the sand-fly family. They swarmed about us in clouds, and the vicious little black brutes attacked us fiercely, and without a moment's pause. In vain we smoked, swore, lashed ourselves with branches of trees; but, like the self-torture of the priests of Baal, "all was of no avail." As for wallaby, there was "nary one;" not even a sign of one. We felt inclined to give up in disgust. We voted camping-out a mistake, holidays a delusion, and wallaby-shooting a snare. We were wet, weary, and worried to death by those demoniacal insects. I got one magnificent view far up the river, from the top of a mighty wall of rocks that dipped down abruptly at my feet, a sheer depth of several hundred feet. At my back was the gloomy bush, every tree bearing bold evidences of the "baptism of fire" which at no distant date must have swept over the forest. Far to the left, and in front, rounded hills, with heathy-looking moor-lands, bosky dells, and shaded ravines, lay spread out in a panorama of weird, sombre beauty. At my feet, far below, the river ran. Every inch of bottom was discernible from where I stood—the yellow sand, the

sunken rock, the deep dark pool, and dancing ripple on the shingly bars.

We descended, moody and sullen; we growled at each other; we cursed the dirty boat, the weather, the arrangements, and things generally. Arrived in camp, we were laughed at; we made a mighty onslaught on the beer barrel, and were comforted. The boys in camp had caught some fine bream. We got on dry clothes, and felt better. That night was a fearful night. In the first place, everything was more or less wet. I had to sleep with my lower extremities grizzling against the heated cylinder of the engine, my head and elbows out in the rain, and the coaming of an infernal hatchway catching me right in the small of my back. To add to my troubles, I got toothache and cramp. Over against the waterfall was another camp, whence issued the sounds of a corroboree, with an occasional howl from a pack of miscellaneous hounds, and altogether I was having a very vivid experience of what it was to rough it in Australia.

Just as we were about settling down for a good snooze, the sound of approaching oars was heard. This turned out to be L—— and the two sable hunters, Bob and Jimmie, from the other camp, where they had been partaking of hospitality, "not wisely, but too well." Bob was helpless, speechless, utterly incapable. Jimmie bundled him ashore on his shoulders, tumbled him down like a sack, and then, like a good true comrade as he was, gave him his own blanket and left him alone in his glory. Now Jimmie proved a horrible nuisance that night, for the visits he paid to the beer-barrel were as the sands of the sea for multitude. Thus passed our first night. My soul was bitter within me, and I yearned for the flesh-pots of

Egypt—the delights and comforts of tent-life in India—as I writhed upon my bed of torture. I had but little sleep, and towards dawn I got up and paced the narrow deck of the launch. A full moon flooded the wooded amphitheatre with a pale pure light; every twig and leaf stood out in bold relief against the pallid light of our Lady Luna, and the silent river ran a very stream of glittering silver. The camp-fire smouldered, with a canopy of light curling smoke, hanging midway between the river and the cliff. Not a sound disturbed the stillness save the murmur of the cascade, the twitter of an early bird, the flop of some sportive fish in training for an aquatic race, or the deep boom of L——'s nasal organ, which caused the deck to quiver with a tremor as the prolonged bass snore rumbled in the calm morning air. Now the harbingers of day—the tiny, twittering birds—began to hop about, ruffling their feathers, chirping and whistling; and ere long the moonlight waned before the approaching sun-god, and the world was once more awake.

We were soon dispersed over the camp, some fishing for black bream, of which there were quantities, while others assisted the cooks in getting breakfast. It was a glorious morning. We were joined now by the valiant Captain W——, the rotund G—— and his friend, and they courteously invited the gunners of our party to join them in a hunt. Those who liked were to try deep-sea fishing; and, after an ample breakfast, we started on our several ways, leaving Old Mull and his man Friday, whose cognomen, by the way, was Monday, to look after preparations for dinner.

Our way lay by the cascade, and in a sheltered nook we came on the captain's camp. A noisy and demonstrative pack of canine creatures came bounding forth

to meet us, and through the smoke loomed large the swarthy features of the celebrated Bundong and his mate Joey. These were to be our shikarrees, masters of the hounds, and directors-general of the beat. Both were "characters." Their eccentricities were unbounded. Bundong had a weakness for liquids, Joey was a Good Templar, but both were ardent sportsmen, and, if the freedom of their criticism and plainness of their speech gave any clue to their politics, they might have been put down as ultra-democrats both.

Our party mustered nine guns in all, and we had a tremendous climb up the almost sheer acclivity, threading our way amid boulders, heaped-up rocks, fallen logs, and mounds of brushwood. We were now on a fine open heath, with an extensive swamp lying in the hollow—the feeder to the rivulet below. Wild flowers of rare beauty, delicate shape, and exquisite colouring, peered up at us from every nook among the ferns and grass-palms. Here the native fuchsia, with its wax-like petals of the loveliest pink, tipped with a pale creamy yellow, trembled on its tiny pedestal. There the Australian honeysuckle, with a deep crimson blossom, imparted a bright air of gaiety and life to the heathy shrubs of dull green with which the upland was clothed. As we marched along in Indian file, Bundong rated his dogs, swore and bellowed, till he was nearly hoarse. When we reached the crest of the ridge, we saw a magnificent panorama stretched out beneath us. At our back lay a bare, rugged brae, studded with stunted shrubs and rugged rocks, jumbled together in picturesque confusion. To our right, the living carpet of rushes and grasses in the basin-like morass. In front a steep declivity, closed with densely-matted brushwood, here and there a tree of snow-white bloom,

showing where the lillipillies scattered their profusion of flowers. On the opposite steep a frowning wall of rock, with caves and crags showing gloomy and dark, or standing boldly confronting us, while the rich sunlight showed every scar and crevice in their weather-beaten recesses. Deep in the dell below a miniature lake lay placid and still, while far out lay spread before us the majestic ocean, with scarcely a ripple breaking the calm expanse of blue, save where a lining of fleecy white gleamed like silver as the mighty swell dashed its foaming volume on the jagged rocks that guarded the coast. The river wound about, and in and out, with a bar of yellow sand gleaming like gold half-way to the sea. But all was still, oppressively still, and the whole scene was one of weird wild beauty, such as I have rarely seen surpassed for grandeur and diversity. We now took our stations along the crest of the hill, I taking the first post behind a hoary old boulder, while the others planted themselves at intervals along the face of the hill right down to the water's edge. Taking the dogs with them, the black fellows took now a wide détour to reach the head of the bush-fringed gully, and we soon heard their wild hallooing and ringing cooee as they urged the dogs into the cover. This is technically termed "wall-bunging;" that is, beating up the game to the concealed sportsmen. D—— was with me, acting as gillie, and for a long time we stirred not hand or foot, and the dogs were getting quite close to our post of observation.

Just then I heard the peculiar bump, bump, which once heard can never be mistaken for aught else but the bounding of a marsupial. The noise came from behind, and looking back, I saw a fine fat wallaby, all unconscious of my proximity, hopping among the rocks

behind me. For a moment it got into a hollow, and the sound ceased. I beckoned D—— to go up the hill and try to drive the quarry in my direction. This he satisfactorily accomplished. I got a good long shot, and had the satisfaction of seeing our bounding brigand topple over. She, for it proved to be a female, with a minute picanniny in her pouch, got up again, however, and was making off, when a second shot brought her to bag. D—— returned, and we shortly afterwards rejoined our disappointed comrades, mine having been the only piece discharged during the beat. A halt for refreshments, and on we went again for a fresh beat. This time L——, G——, and another lucky one got each a wallaby, and having doubled back round the hill, the cravings of the inner man made us look at our watches. It was long past dinner-time. Wallabys were scarce, dogs and men were tired, so we resolved to return. This we did, carrying the slain along with us.

Reaching the stream, we paused to admire one of the rarest little nooks of sylvan beauty that perhaps could be found in the colony. The streamlet in its descent had scooped out a basin in the rock. A deep still pool, with flashes of amber and gold and pale green, where the struggling sunbeams peered through the thick shade of the gum-trees. A huge prostrate monarch of the forest spanned the upper part of the hollow like an arch, and stag ferns and others of surpassing loveliness formed a drooping fringe of living green from every projecting buttress and shady cranny. The water flashed with a pleasant gurgling murmur, and the whole *ensemble* breathed an air of the deepest serenity and peace. It was a gem of a picture. The whole thing was perfect. Every stone, rock, leaf, frond,

dripping spray, and moss-grown trunk were so harmoniously blended, so beautifully proportioned, so perfectly fitted, that we could not resist an involuntary exclamation of delight and admiration. However, appetite jogged us, and we again descended the steep, abrupt decline. What a glorious dinner we had! How can I describe the toothsome fare, Toohey's beer not being forgotten. The fishing party had been successful, having caught forty-five magnificent schnapper and tailor, rain-bow, parrot, and other fish of many sorts.

That night we had a grand corroboree at the captain's camp, and I quite won the hearts of the dusky "wall-bungers" by a Hindostanee song, given with the true nasal drawl, high-pitched treble, and the long-drawn quavers and semi-quavers of the bronzed beauties of dear old India.

Sunday morning broke fair and beautiful—both camps had by this time thoroughly fraternized, and we breakfasted together. I could linger lovingly over the remembrance of the delicious schnapper for breakfast. Poor old H——, always somehow managing to get into trouble, slipped down the bank among the sharp oyster shells, and got badly cut about the hands and legs. He bore it all, however, with the most imperturbable good-humour. We spent the day bathing and wandering through the lovely bush.

Next day Father Christmas, A——, and one or two others proposed a pull up the river, and as the tide was running up strong we started. G——, Charley, L——, and myself took our guns, as there was a chance of securing Wonga pigeons. These may be considered as the delicacy *par excellence* of an Australian sportsman's bag. They are fine big plump birds, and almost approach in flavour, I think, to a florican. Our pull up

the river was the treat of the outing. The scenery was exquisitely beautiful.

Leaving the busy camp behind us we quickly entered into a narrow gorge, with massy buttresses of rock guarding the defile. Gnarled roots wound their sinewy arms like huge snakes among the crevices, and gaunt, distorted, weather-beaten trunks sprang from the solid rock, in places where it seemed almost impossible for vegetation to exist. The cliffs towered high above on either bank, and an arch of living green met overhead as the trees swayed to and fro with the wind, shaking hands together across the clear stream, which ran silently far below. Some of the dells looked like pictures of fairy-land; palms, tree-ferns, mosses, wild flowers, and a wondrous wealth of rare vegetable forms of surpassing beauty clothed each dell in a living carpet of emerald; and many of the caves showed wonderful studies of light and shade as the scattered sunbeams darted through the umbrageous canopy, and played in a thousand sparkling colours on rock and stream and fern-fringed shore. In some places huge trees lay half submerged in the water. Here the river narrowed, as a deep gorge pent up the tide; there it rippled over shingly or sandy bars, and we could see the mullet ray-fish and whiting dart about in shoals. Occasionally a crane would get up with slow, heavy flight, an eagle-hawk would soar majestically with full expanded wings over-head, or a kingfisher, resplendent in emerald, crimson, and gold, would flash past like a mimic rainbow. In our quest for game we were disappointed; but the loveliness and still beauty of the scene harmonized well with the calm sunny day, and we emphatically enjoyed the soft silent gliding along, amid the rare charms of scenery so beautifully displayed on

every hand. We went with the tide as far as we could go, until our progress was barred by a perfect barricade of fallen trees. Higher up, the scenery is still more lovely; but if we were not to be left high and dry on one of the numerous bars, we must retrace our passage.

Dropping down with the tide, several of us, divested of our habiliments, floated with the boat, pushed her over the shallow parts, dived under in the deep cool pools, and looked like an attendant convoy of Tritons round the car of Neptune. Albeit, several of the Tritons bore more resemblance to the proverbial grampus than to the graceful dolphin.

Reaching camp, we found one of our number had been lucky enough to shoot a very handsome male lyre-bird. This was the more fortunate for him, as these birds are notoriously shy, and difficult to stalk. A friend who is conversant with the subject tells me in reference to the lyre-bird, that the female makes her nest either on a shelving rock or a convenient hollow of a large tree. It consists of a great quantity of sticks and pieces of bark, and is lined with dry grass and feathers. The nest is so small that the wonder is how the bird gets in. The nest, usually, if not always, contains but an only young one, which is a very helpless and featherless creation for a long time. If the nest is discovered, the mother, usually so timid, seems to lose all shyness in her anxiety for her young, and, when the intruder is about the locality of the nest, she will keep scratching and chirping about as if she were alone. No amount of interference with the nest and young will scare her off. If the young one be taken from the nest it is almost impossible to rear it, and it is equally difficult to domesticate the old bird. A

gentleman, well acquainted with the haunts and habits of the lyre-bird, recently informed me that the only successful attempt ever made to bring the birds to friendly terms was by a Mr. Mahan, at Wood's Point, a settlement in the Gipps Land ranges in Victoria. They are very abundant thereabout, and, by a system of what is known as figure 4 traps, he could easily get hold of as many as he required. At great labour he used to find white grubs, which sustained them till they would pick particles of lean beef, but some would die of sulk, and some of dysentery. Mr. Mahan had a very commodious outhouse, in a corner of which he had a large frame cage, in which he kept his captives for some days till they began to feed, when he let them out. He always kept large heaps of mould on the floor, and the birds had free access to the cross-beams and rafters, on which they delighted to hop and dance about. He had some birds for over four years in fine health and quite tame, and was in hopes of some day making a valuable contribution to the zoological collection in Melbourne, when all his efforts were frustrated by a virago of a neighbour, who, for some paltry grievance, poisoned them all. This is the more unfortunate as it is very unlikely that a similar effort will be made for many a day by him or any one else, as the patience required is seldom possessed by anybody, not to speak of the labour and expense, both of which are very considerable items. All the plumage of the lyre-bird is dark and soft, not a single interesting feather in it except the harp-shaped tail of the male bird. But this is very beautiful, and when the bird is scratching the little mould heaps and soft banks for grubs, he keeps all the time whistling with most extraordinary and varied melody, having the tail ex-

panded to the fullest extent. It is generally asserted that the lyre-bird is a mocker, but it is more likely that his notes are his own. The range of his notes is so extensive, and their continuity so prolonged and beautiful, that whoever will have the ability and means to renew Mr. Mahan's effort, and be successful in domesticating a male bird that will whistle in captivity, will have accomplished a task that ought to reward him well, and bring the thanks of all enthusiastic naturalists.

After this digression anent the lyre-bird, we adjourned to dinner. Shades of Apicius, Lucullus, Dr. Kitchener, Meg Dods, and all giants of gastronomy, what a feast that was. The succulence, flavour, tenderness, odour, and all sorts of good qualities possessed by the viands beggar description, and when the huge plum-pudding, flaming in its brandy sauce, scenting the wild bush with odours of Ambrosia and Arcady, was solemnly placed upon the board, we simultaneously leapt to our feet to cheer the cooks, and, if truth must be told, to shake down a little of the cargo previously stowed.

In the evening we went over to the captain's camp. Bundong and Joey sang us several corroborees: I gave a Persian guzzul and several Hindoostanee operatic selections; while with song, jest, and anecdote we passed a glorious time till the crescent moon waxed and waned again, and then we sought our couches. Several of the boys went 'possum shooting, but met with little success. Several of us were decidedly Bacchanalian, and music had her votaries. Her soothing charms failed signally on this occasion, however, to reconcile G— to the harmony. After an unusually excruciating burst of song, he was observed to arouse

him, mutter a few disjointed observations, bless all his musical children, and dash wildly from the hut with a 'possum rug in the one hand and somebody else's boots in the other.

The sun shone fair on Tuesday morning, and there was a general hunt for ferns and specimens of plants.

After another sumptuous breakfast, at which curry was a feature, we broke up our camp. The whistle shrieked, we bore slowly off, leaving behind us such evidences of our stay as might have fitted out a local rag fair, equal in wealth of incongruities to any collection in any metropolis.

How shall I tell of the fishing, the juicy ham—the unfailing barrel of beer, a very widow's cruse in its inexhaustibleness, the speeches, and the songs? We fairly over-flowed with melody. Poor F—— had an ugly and acutely painful accident. A huge schnapper hook buried itself deeply in the back of his hand, reaching to the bone, and wedged fast, barb and all, among the muscles. Fortunately I had a case of taxidermist instruments with me, and managed a very neat and successful surgical operation with the aid of a slender scalpel. Poor F—— bore the pain like a man. Then there was the disembarkation. It was dark. The pier consisted of a single plank, stretching far out over the flat, mud-covered shore. It was at some altitude above the mud. It was piled up with swags, gun-cases, ferns, boxes, bundles, barrels, all the impedimenta and camp-baggage of the expedition. My readers can imagine the consequence when our gay sportsmen landed and commenced to wend their weary way ashore. Flop went one—splash went another. One demented youth was intercepted by Bob as he was trying to

plough his way through the sea-weed out to the middle of the bay.

At length we all got safely ashore. Two vans were waiting for us. To the very last the admirable arrangement, management, and forethought of the projectors and directors of the party were manifest. We had a most musical procession up to Sydney, and parted at the railway station, after one of the jolliest excursions I have ever enjoyed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I become manager of a newspaper—Australian journalism—Editors in the Antipodes—Characteristics of the Australian Press—General high tone of the same—The *Sydney Morning Herald*—Literary talent plentiful but ill-remunerated—The *Australian Magazine*—*Sydney Punch*—*Illustrated Sydney News*—Newspaper correspondents—The Miner's Advocate—General estimate of the Colonial Press.

My next Antipodean experience was to be in a line hitherto unattempted by me, but for which a good friend imagined I had some aptitude. This was neither more nor less than to take over the management of what was then the second daily morning newspaper in the colony of New South Wales. The proposal at first staggered me. Here was a change with a vengeance, from tiger-slaying, jungle-clearing, coolie-counting, and pig-sticking in India.

The state of my health, however, precluded all idea of returning to India in my old capacity, and I could not for ever subsist on the liberality of my brother's administration of what he was good enough to call "my credit account." I was fast getting to the end of my slender means, and the future seemed doubtful and very gloomy at times. My letters to the *Pioneer* could not always last, and beyond the payment I got for these, I was earning nothing else. I did write a few articles for the *Sydney Mail* and *Echo*, and was

glad to get the anything but princely remuneration which these earned when they were accepted, which was not always the case. In fact the colonies do not present a very tempting field to the professional literary man, and up till then my pen had been rather that of an amateur. I had, however, no objection to try and earn my spurs honourably. Rather than stick fast, I was willing to work at anything honest, for even thirty shillings a week; for I had no desire to be a burden to my friends, and I had long ago found the truth of the old adage that "God helps those who help themselves."

I only give this little morsel of personal experience to illustrate what I have often seen since in colonial life, namely, that there is a groove for every willing man in the colonies, if only he will try to suit himself to it. No man need remain idle in Australia. There is work for all, and, although the work that first presents itself may not be the most congenial, yet if the intending colonist be not a fool, or worse—a lazy good-for-naught, he will wisely accept what comes, buckle to with a will, try his best to do what falls to his lot, and never fear but he will soon find friends and opportunities, and if he is wise willing and steady, he may take advantage of both, and probably very soon find the groove that fits him best.

At all events such has been my experience. My friend fancied I was fit to do the work that he wanted to have done. It was not my place to say him nay. I had plenty of will and no little self-confidence; and accordingly I received my instructions, and set out for Newcastle, the great emporium of the Australian coal trade, to take temporary management of the *Newcastle Morning Herald.* The proprietor had been at the point

of death from rheumatic fever. Things were drifting into confusion. The concern wanted management for the time, and I was sent to do my best to assist the scarcely convalescent printer, collect accounts, arrange financial matters, and generally to do my best in the interests of my employers. My salary was to be at the rate of 200*l.* a year. It was rather a difference from 600 rupees a month, with manager's allowances, and twenty-five per cent. commission on profits, but I was content to begin at that.

Perhaps the reader will not expect a long disquisition on the Australian Press from me. If so he will be disappointed. I was first manager, then editor, of the Newcastle leading daily paper for more than a year. I worked hard, took an active intelligent interest in my work, slaved at it night after night, till far on into the small hours. I was reporter, book-keeper, canvasser, special correspondent, publisher, sub-editor and editor by turns, and all together, and I well know how hard it is to satisfy the insatiable requirements of the friends whose pabulum is "Copy," and whose appetite is that of the horse-leech. I have been through the mill, and can speak with a little authority, but my remarks will be very brief.

At first, to make myself familiar as far as I could with the details of a printing-office, I used to get up in the middle of the night, and wend my way from the hotel, over to the machine-room, where in an atmosphere reeking of oil, smoke, damp paper, and kindred smells, I watched the operations connected with the getting out of the paper. I tried to familiarize myself with the mysteries of the composing-room; and by degrees, the suspicion with which I was at first regarded gave place to a feeling of much friendliness on the

part of the men, and I think I fairly won my way into the esteem of every one connected with the establishment. I had disagreeables. Being a quick writer, and thinking well over my subject before I began to write, I composed quickly, and the proprietor, who was not a man of much reading, or large order of intellect, sometimes fancied I earned my enormous salary of four pounds per week too easily.

Gradually my managerial duties merged into those of the editor, and I had the satisfaction, at the end of a probationary period of six months or thereabouts, of knowing that the paper was extending its circulation, reducing its pecuniary liabilities, and gaining influence. This may sound like self-praise. Much was due, I think, to the cordial co-operation I got from the hands. A practical enough proof of my success was vouchsafed me in the increase of my salary.

Beyond the limit of 300*l.* or 400*l.* per annum few country newspapers can afford to pay their editors. As a class the editors of our newspapers in New South Wales are clever versatile educated men. With a few ignoble exceptions, measures rather than men are what they write about, and for intelligence, breadth of treatment, dispassionate logical argument, clear incisive writing, and indeed graces of style, the country press of New South Wales will compare favourably with the average run of provincial journalism, even in the old country. The abominable personalities, which too frequently disgrace American journalism, are very seldom resorted to. There is a healthy freedom from the sensationalism of the Yankee editor, and no pains are spared to make the news furnished to their readers possess that first virtue in journalism, trustworthiness.

The metropolitan daily papers, have a very extended

circulation over the length and breadth of the land, consequently the weekly and bi-weekly journals confine themselves principally to local items, and the advocacy of local interests. Foreign news are supplied almost wholly by Reuter, and Greville's Telegraphic Agency in Sydney supply general and intercolonial news. The service of the latter it would be hard to beat anywhere. Its condensed epitomes of news are models of copiousness, clearness, and accuracy. Most country journals, too, contain a weekly letter from a Sydney correspondent. This is written in many cases by a young civilian in some government office, by a schoolmaster, or, maybe in some very few cases, by a reporter on one of the Sydney papers. The professed journalist is elbowed out of the crowd by this outside competition, and the remuneration is hardly regal. One pound per week is about the average. I was fortunate in having friends in Queensland, and in Melbourne, both gifted men, who for the love they bore me sent me weekly a letter of news from their respective capitals. I would have wished to employ professional talent, but the concern would not stand it.

A miserable attempt has been made lately by a few of the colonial papers, to magnify themselves and increase their ignoble earnings, by pandering to the passions of the mob and trying to rouse class antagonisms. Mistaking invective for argument, and declamatory phraseology for really strong writing, they have appealed to passion rather than to judgment, and have, in attempting to adopt an American sensational style, proved simply abominable copies of a bad model. Still, I repeat that the tone of the colonial press generally is thoroughly sound. It is calmly critical of questions of public policy, and nearly all

its utterances are characterized by moderate judgment and good taste. I might better illustrate what I wish to convey, by telling a few of its negative qualities. You seldom hear, for instance (always with a few well-known exceptions and notable sinners), of a journal being prosecuted for libel, or for contempt of court. You seldom hear of an exposure of untruthful or misleading statements or intelligence. You seldom hear of a colonial editor being kicked, cow-hided, pistolled, becudgelled, or personally maltreated. I might add that you seldom hear of his being over-paid. You seldom see colonial newspapers defiled with certain disgraceful advertisements, such as may be seen in provincial prints in countries not so far away from London as Australia. You seldom see in a colonial newspaper prurient cases, that no man would like to put before his women-kind; or sickening details of sensuality and cruelty; or harrowing revelations of crime. The colonial newspaper, in short, is written for intelligent, self-respecting men; and not for debased and unwholesome minds, who delight in spicy tittle-tattle or pot-house *double entendre.*

Surely this says a great deal for the tone of public taste and morality in these colonies. I doubt not if there was a demand for this unclean literature, a supply would be forthcoming. To the honour of Australia, and of much-maligned Sydney in particular, be it said, that every attempt to foist a publication that tried to tickle the palates of its readers with police-office experiences, and night-house disclosures, has been an unqualified failure.

Honestly I believe too, that much of this is due to the leading paper of the colony, the *Sydney Morning Herald.* That newspaper has long held virtually a

monopoly in the metropolis, which, however, is now being threatened by a vigorous young rival in the *Daily Telegraph*, whose opening career gives promise of a useful and successful future.

The *Herald* has been accused by its detractors of dulness, of a trimming hesitancy to speak out boldly on public matters, of following rather than guiding public opinion on questions of moment, of giving undue prominence to parochial matters, at the expense of news of more general interest. Whatever may be laid to its charge, it has certainly advocated, in my opinion, on all the great questions that have agitated men's minds, during my stay here, the course considered wisest and best by the ablest men in the colony: has been calm, courteous, dispassionate, ably edited and conducted, possessed of the latest, best, and most reliable intelligence from all parts of the world, and whatever side of a question it may have taken up, it has at least carried with it the universal respect of all good men and true, whether they agreed with its politics or no. It must I think be conceded that it has used its enormous influence, honestly to uphold the credit and honour of the colony, and advance its best interests.

Of other literature, Australia can already boast of no mean array. There is no lack of literary talent in the colonies, but it is wofully ill-remunerated. Publishers are not famed as a rule for generosity, and until population much increases I fear me that Antipodean authorship will not amass many princely fortunes for its followers. One capital monthly, the *Australian Magazine*, is now published in Sydney, and promises to become an established and deservedly favourite periodical. The *Sydney Punch*, too, is a

vigorous sapling for so young a community, and proves pleasingly enough, that Momus can shake his sides with genuine merriment, in the land of the Emu and the Kangaroo.

We can boast of a capital illustrated monthly, the *Illustrated Sydney News*, which in form and general excellence is no discredit to the oldest English colony, and, indeed, is in most respects superior to the American illustrated weeklies, those of New York for instance. Castner's *Rural Australasian* is conducted after the model of the *American Agriculturist*, and is a little gem of its kind. It is devoted exclusively to farming and gardening, and merits the utmost success.

As a general newspaper, however, give me the *Queenslander*; taking it all round, I consider it the best weekly newspaper for its class of readers, of any south of the line. Some of the Melbourne and South Australian newspapers have a world-wide reputation, and I need not refer to them, as I have not yet visited these colonies on this trip.

To return to my own paper. I very soon found that the editorial chair, even by the wildest confusion of metaphors, cannot be looked on as a bed of roses. My greatest difficulty in finding daily pabulum for my readers, was not where to get material or how; but rather what to exclude. The mass of stuff I had to wade through daily, nearly all of it utterly inadmissible into a respectable journal, astonished me at first. I soon got used to it, and my waste-paper basket would have supplied wrappings for all the buttermen in Dorsetshire.

The miners had been indulged to an inordinate extent by the former management, and the editor's box was deluged daily with reams of twaddle, for the most

part badly written, badly spelt, badly perfumed effusions on every conceivable subject; I had great difficulty at first in getting this *cacoethes scribendi* restrained within reasonable limits. Nearly all the letters were very personal. Very few were of the slightest earthly interest to any but the writer, and possibly a dozen of his own intimate friends; yet they would write as if the constitution was in danger and the capital in flames, when perhaps the question at issue would be what Owen Jones said to Morgan Phillips on some occasion that nobody remembered, and about something in which no one felt interested. My correspondents in the mining townships little knew the worry and trouble that their rambling epistles gave me; I had to cater for the varying tastes of nearly 3000 readers daily, when every column of the paper, advertising space included, would have been all insufficient to contain half the letters that were daily showered on my editorial table. And then if the letters were not inserted, who shall tell of the innuendoes, the abuse, the fiery indignation, that were showered on my devoted head.

Our paper was specially devoted to the interests of the mining population around Newcastle, and was looked upon as their champion, and the recognized exponent of their views. Its advocacy was in fact of the thorough-going order, and often partook a good deal of the special pleader character. I did not meddle with the coal question or purely mining matters. These were manipulated by experts, and there was a good deal of wire-pulling and puppet-dancing.

The miners of Newcastle, I must honestly say, are on the whole orderly, intelligent men, albeit self-opinionated and narrow-minded on some points. Their

estimate of their own importance was often amusingly manifested. Here is an extract from one of their lodge meetings in illustration of this.

"Mr. T. Jones moved the following resolution:—'In the opinion of this meeting, the attack made by Mr. Craig, on the character of our local Sec., was unwarrantable and uncalled for.' He had full confidence in Mr. Newburn and he felt strongly that Mr. Craig should have cast such a slur on him. It was a pity that any man should stur up strife [*sic*] at so critical a time as the present, when the world was looking at them."

The last sentence is thoroughly characteristic.

I tried to infuse a more catholic spirit into the journal under my temporary direction. I preached up sanitary and local reforms of various kinds, drew attention to foreign politics, to the commercial interests of the port, to intercolonial questions affecting trade, to broad questions of national policy such as law reform, railway extension, direct shipments from the port to foreign and intercolonial parts, and similar questions. I was fairly successful, and I have reason to believe my efforts were appreciated.

I have, I think, said enough to convince the reader, that in that first and foremost bulwark of a people's liberties, a pure independent and intelligent press, the Australian colonies stand second to none among all the bright jewels that cluster round the diadem of Imperial Britain, and that so long as the colonial press maintains its present high prestige, the cause of progress and freedom will find a faithful exponent, and a chivalrous champion.

CHAPTER XIX.

The city of Newcastle, New South Wales—Buildings, wharves, cranes, &c.—Badly laid out—The Sand Drift—Subordination of great national works to petty local wants—Negligence of sanitary principles—Want of public spirit—Want of a proper water supply—The filth and squalor of a colonial town—How contagion spreads—The shipping—Pall of smoke—Port defences—The coal trade—Devices for keeping up the price of coal—Short history of the relations between the masters and miners—The Vend Scheme—Both sides—The miners—Their sports and general characteristics—Chinese gardeners—Miners' houses.

I HAVE endeavoured to avoid making my rambling notes and jottings suggestive of the directory or guide-book, and as statistical information nowadays is so easily obtainable, I do not intend to run into figures, and state how many inhabitants reside here or there, what are the imports and exports of this port or that, and add up the bills of mortality. All these can be found if the reader's tastes run that way, in the parliamentary blue books and local directories; no better epitome of the kind can be got than "The Industrial Progress of New South Wales," being a report of the Intercolonial Exhibition of 1870 at Sydney, printed by the government printer, Mr. Richards.

Newcastle, as every one knows, is the second city in New South Wales. It is situated at the mouth of the Hunter river, which drains one of the richest and most

populous districts in the colony. It owes its importance to the magnificent deposits of coal which here lie scattered in vast layers all over the district.

The city proper is only about twenty years old, is built on a hill overlooking the mouth of the Hunter river, and owes its progress and present importance to the coal-mines that have been established in the neighbourhood. These give employment to nearly 3000 miners, principally Northumbrians and Welshmen, and for miles inland there are numerous populous villages clustering round the pits, and but for the eternal bush and the colonial aspect of the houses, most of them being mere huts of rough weather-boards, rudely roofed with stringy bark, one could almost fancy himself in the heart of a mining district at home. The bar at the mouth of the Hunter is dangerous, and disasters are frequent. There is a peculiar isolated rock, called "Nobbys," which stands up boldly at the end of the breakwater, and the lighthouse on this serves as a prominent mark to mariners sailing along the coast. The shipping is large, and immense quantities of coal are shipped to the various intercolonial ports, to China, Java, Singapore, and the East, to the South Pacific Islands, and to San Francisco, Valparaiso, and other American ports.

The town is dingy, dusty, and smoky. There are commodious wharves, and a perfect network of rails; huge shoots for the coal waggons; and magnificent hydraulic cranes, derricks and raised platforms rear their unsightly limbs in all directions near the harbour. It is a busy place, and everything wears a smutty grimy look, reminding the wanderer at every step of the great staple of the district, Old King Coal. On the north shore of the harbour are extensive copper

smelting works, the lurid fires gleaming redly into the night. Numerous small craft bring down cargoes of railway sleepers and other timber, country produce, and grains from the farms in the interior. A railway runs up to Tamworth, about 182 miles, through the fertile country stretching along both sides of the Hunter river. It is being extended, and will eventually run through the fertile New England district joining the Queensland railway, no doubt, as population and cultivation extend. There are many banks and public offices in the town; a large imposing custom-house and numerous churches; none of them with great pretensions to architectural beauty. In fact the principal English church dignified with the imposing title of cathedral is a most unsightly, tumble-down structure, and would insult a Midlothian barn by comparison.

Like its great rival Sydney, the city of Newcastle has been badly laid out. There was not much building-ground between the steep hill on which the houses cluster and the sea. Magnificent hydraulic cranes have now been erected, by which the utmost expedition in lading and discharging cargo can be attained. To the back of the city a most phenomenal plague has baffled all the engineering skill that has so far been brought to bear upon it. This consists of a sand drift, a sort of perpetually encroaching avalanche or moving earthquake of sand, which keeps on year after year eating its way onward, has swallowed houses, engulfed roads, borne down fences and barriers, and threatens to entomb the city on that side altogether. Formerly a dense scrub sufficed to interpose an impassable barrier, but with the reckless waste in timber-cutting so characteristic of the colonists, this invaluable

scrub was long ago cut down to act as struts in the mines or firewood for the miners. Nothing yet attempted seems to have resulted practically, and the sand drift is becoming an evil of portentous magnitude. Planting trees would be, I think, the only sufficient remedy, and for this the Ailanthus would seem to be the best adapted, having been used for a similar purpose in Algeria and other places. The formation of great trenches filled with brush, scrub, and dead wood, might arrest the sand, as has been done at Montrose and other places on the east coast of Scotland. On the *dunes* thus thrown up by the arrested sand, bent grass might be planted, and would perhaps succeed. In any other community such experiments would have been tried long ago; but here, government is expected to do everything, and when every petty parish in the land is clamouring for a share of the public plunder, great works such as this are left neglected. I might name a score of national works in one breath which are thus subordinated to petty local requirements: Drainage; water supply; irrigation; forest conservation; suburban railway extension; bridges; viaducts; metropolitan railway extension; tramways *et hoc genus omne.* All, all, neglected, gone at with occasional spasmodic jerks, spoken about, reported on, and then quietly shelved or pigeon-holed for another decade, till another temporary stimulus is perfunctorily applied. The railway system, the public works, the administration of the lands office, are in New South Wales the symbols for everything imbecile and contemptible.

In nothing does the want of system and organized effort more remarkably display itself than in the almost total absence of all attention to sanitary science.

Mr. Burton Bradley, a well-known and respected colonist, has written, lectured, and worked, for years with indefatigable ardour and devotion in this cause, and he has a few enlightened and sympathetic fellow-workers, but practically the colony is behind a Hindoo village in this respect. In Newcastle, for instance, a crowded cemetery takes up the very heart of the city, and the exudations from it drain into nearly every well in the lower and more crowded portion of the town. A new cemetery has, it is true, been lately dedicated, but is likely to be for years unused, by reason of the pitiful bickerings of rival sects about the acres apportioned to the poor dead dust.

It is now (1879) nearly three years since Mr. Clarke, the celebrated hydraulic engineer, reported on the water supply of the Hunter River district towns. The report was highly approved of, money was to be devoted to carry out the scheme at once. A great show of activity and zealous effort was made, surveys were instituted, plans were drawn out. I believe even a skeleton staff of officials was appointed. What is the result? Night after night some miserable jackdaw in the parliament, who has unearthed a bone, in the shape of a petty personal scandal, moves the adjournment of the House, that the dirty linen may be washed in public. Session after session is wasted, and great schemes of national weal, such as this of water supply, get shelved, while hundreds of easily preventible deaths annually occur from bad water, defective drainage, neglect of sanitary laws. Nothing is done by the legislature, absolutely no progress is made. In November, 1877, I wrote as follows. I make no apology for reproducing this article here, for written with no intention of ever being put before an English audience,

they may be accepted as honest outspoken criticisms, and give a good idea of the state of things against which they were written at the time. I am sorry to say that the signs of improvement seem tardy of approach. My article, written in 1877, applies with just as much force to the state of things now as it did then. Here it is:—

The laws of health, the origin of disease, the conditions of life, in connexion with drainage, proper ventilation, fresh water, pure air, and free room, have all been exhaustively studied, and written, and talked about, and acted on, until we have really very little more to learn in connexion with the science and practice of sanitation. It would seem, however, as if it had been altogether and utterly neglected in Newcastle. No provision whatever for a wise sanitation in our city seems to have been made. Although the town may originally have been built at hap-hazard, streets started leading to nowhere, impassable and impossible thoroughfares projected, houses tumbled down at every angle to each other, and evidently built without the slightest regard to order, method, or design: there yet seems to be, as time goes on, and attention is directed to other matters, a most fatal apathy shown as regards sanitary measures for the proper conservation of the health of the town. Go into any back yard, almost in any quarter of the city, or look from the back windows of almost any street, and the eye roves over the most inconceivable jumble of nuisances and unlovely sights that could be anywhere imagined. The appearance of our filthy, squalid courts would disgrace the most tumbledown Irish collection of hovels, or the proverbially dirty purlieus of a Spanish or Mexican village. On every hand rise

out-offices, placed cheek by jowl with water-tanks, and in close proximity to wells. The dry earth system never seems to have been heard of in Newcastle, and the most fearful odours and mephitic exhalations rise and fester in the close-confined, poisonous, reeking atmosphere, without the slightest attempt at check, removal, or restraint. Nay, more! This horrible state of things is accepted without a murmur, as quite a part of the situation, and to all appearance irremediable. A sickly steamy smell pervades the air, and in the worst places, and near some of the drains, the smell is deadly in its horribleness. How, in God's name, can children, nay, robust men and women, be expected to remain healthy, with such an atmosphere and such a state of things around them? We are no alarmists, we have no wish to indulge in sensational writing, but we do say that we are standing on the edge of a crater, on the brink of a terrible danger. At every breath we draw we are in danger of inhaling the ghastly germs of disease, and strenuous efforts should be made to at least ameliorate this most forbidding and disgusting state of things. It would surely not be impossible to have the gutters of the principal streets flushed at least once or twice a week. The fire-engines could be utilized for that purpose, and water is plentiful at least in the harbour. Much can be done by individual efforts and personal cleanliness. The unsightly collections of litter in back yards should be removed. The dry earth system should be introduced, and insisted on, by owners of houses, and heads of families. It can be introduced at very little extra trouble and expense, and even the dust from our streets could be utilized, and form a valuable deodorizer and subsequent fertilizer. This again leads us to

inquire where are the gardens that should surround our town with a belt of verdure and beauty? Is it owing once again to the vile monopoly in land, which we have so often written against and deplored. What is to hinder the swamps and flats around Burwood, the Glebe, Hamilton, Wickham and Bullock Island, from being cultivated? Were the land to be had at reasonably low rents, we doubt not kitchen gardening would give employment to hundreds of hardworking honest sons of toil. The town and shipping would absorb all that could be raised in the way of fruits and vegetables, and in place of unhealthy swamps, and unlovely mud flats,—the haunt of mosquitoes, agues, and fevers,—we would have smiling gardens and trim cottages nestling snugly each in its neatly cultivated patch. These would beautify the landscape, purify the atmosphere, enhance the value and attractiveness of the city, and support a large industrious population of happy, healthy, and prosperous citizens. Carbolic acid, chloride of lime, or other disinfectants, should be used in all out-offices and cess-pits at least twice a week, and as citizens we should not rest till our drainage is made worthy of the scientific age in which we live; our water supply be secured without further shuffling and delay, and a wise system of sanitation adopted and insisted on in our midst. Why, the state of our town is a standing menace, a defiance of nature, a scandal and reproach to our civilization. In the boasted second city of New South Wales there is not a latrine, a public urinal, a public bath, one decently paved street, one healthy drain, or (shall we add?) one spark of honest regard for the grand truth, "cleanliness is next to godliness."

At the present writing (July, 1879) the matter is

seemingly no further advanced than it was three years ago.[1]

All this does not overstate the case. Sanitary science is practically ignored in New South Wales. Sydney is just as great a sinner in this respect as Newcastle. The surplus from the shameful alienation of crown lands is frittered away in a thousand unproductive directions, and the death-rate yearly mounts up higher.

Newcastle, by its most ardent admirer, could not be called a beautiful town. But for the ever glorious sea, rolling its billows on the sandy beach, there is in fact no animation in the landscape. The shipping, when the harbour is full, always suggests pleasant imaginings, the principal of which centre round the suggestion, that by means of their white sails and glistening hulls, one can be transported from the stench and dust and grime of this deadly dirty town. A dense pall of smoke ever hangs over the town and district, and even far out at sea the captain of your steamer will point to the distant thick curtain of lowering smoke, and say, "There lies Newcastle."

[1] The following table is from Mr. Clarke's report on the water supply, compiled by Mr. George Wallace, Mayor of Newcastle. The facts and figures are alarmingly suggestive and speak for themselves. They indicate as Mr. Clarke says a "death rate of 42·6 in 1000," or nearly three times the number which nature demands as inevitable.

The table shows that :—

In 1871	the deaths were	285
„ 1872	„	294
„ 1873	„	345
„ 1874	„	439
„ 1875	„	517
„ 1876	„	628

The average percentage of zymotic disease for the last five years is 20·6 ; in 1876 it was 32·1.

There is no doubt that with its mineral wealth and favoured position, it is destined to become one of the greatest shipping ports of the Pacific coasts, and numerous costly and scientific appliances are at work, deepening and improving the harbour, developing the resources, and utilizing the wealth and productions of this flourishing district. In this respect there is no cause for complaint, but then these affect pockets, not lives. A very fine breakwater is being thrown out into the sea, and serious attention has been drawn, despite the short-sighted obstructiveness of a few members of parliament, towards the efficient defence of this most important naval station, in case of attack. Preparation is undoubtedly the best defence, and it is to be hoped the defence works, begun during the panic of the time when the British fleet steamed up to Besika Bay, will not share the fate of the water supply scheme, and be put off till the Greek Kalends. It is highly probable, however, that such will be their fate.

Previous to 1874 there was a keen competition among the collieries for customers, the consequence being ruinous lowering of prices, reduced wages, and general depression. In that year an agreement was made between masters and men of certain collieries (known thenceforth as the Associated Collieries), by which this competition was, to a certain extent, restricted, the associated masters agreeing on a uniform fixed price. At the same time one of the grandest arrangements ever entered into between capital and labour was made, so say its authors. This was a sliding scale of wages, by which, as the price of coals rose, the wages of the miners rose *pro rata*, and this has, without doubt, materially contributed to the prosperity of the district, and the development of the

coal-mining industry. As the matter is of great interest to capitalists, both here and at home, I give the agreement in the Appendix.[1] Last year, however, 1878, there were symptoms of a split, and much agitation arose in the district in consequence. It was said that while ostensibly sticking to the agreement, some of the associated collieries were resorting to the old trick of underselling the others. The quarrel waxed fierce and hot. It will not interest the general reader to recapitulate all the phases of the controversy that arose. Suffice it to say that the agreement, in its first integrity, had to be given up. A makeshift was hit upon in the shape of the Vend Scheme.

By this all the associated collieries had a certain amount of their total output of coal allotted to them, corresponding to the amount shipped during the year from the port, the number of hands employed, the capabilities of the pit, and so on. When the allotted output had been reached, the mine had to stop work, and, in fact, in some cases this has been done. There are symptoms, however, that this cannot last long. One proprietor has looked on this as an attempt on the part of the men to fetter his right of free action to raise as much coal as he can, to sell as much as he can, and to whom he will. Other masters grumble at their allotment, and the whole scheme is but protection in its worst form, at the expense of the general public who are the purchasers. The Illawana mines in the south, and the mountain mines in the interior, are redoubling their efforts to acquire a share in the trade. Borings for coal are being prosecuted underneath and around Sydney, and signs are not wanting that the

[1] Note C, Appendix III.

Newcastle coal monopoly is in danger of being broken up.

Whether this will be an unmixed blessing or not remains to be seen. The Vend scheme is rotten in principle. The mutual agreement and sliding-scale was infinitely better. Even that bore hard on the consumer, but he had to take what he could get, and be thankful he got coal at any price. Unrestricted competition will to a certainty stimulate enterprise. Cheap coal will be hailed as a boon; it will help to foster and promote manufacturing works, and it may attract increased shipping and beget a much larger output of coal. We shall see.

The upholders of the monopoly and high-selling price of coal say that the trade is limited; that only a certain number of ships come out, or are attracted to the port; and that there is no scope for an increased export trade. This also has to be proved. Meanwhile housekeepers and shippers alike grumble, but the coal ring burrow away and enjoy the goods the gods provide, undisturbed alike by malediction or laudation.

The miners, it must be said, are not as a rule a thrifty race. When they have been earning good wages much more of their earnings might have found their way to the savings-bank than has been the case. Consequently, when hard times come they quickly feel the pinch. Gold-mining has been in a depressed state ever since the mania of 1872; and other employments are uncongenial to the sons of Pluto. When the harbour, therefore, is empty, and work slack at the pit, the miner has rather hard times of it.

They are paid 5*s*. per ton for cutting coal, and were they in regular work could make about a pound sterling

per diem. They are not, however, in regular work, and probably average about 5*l.* to 6*l.* a fortnight. They are paid fortnightly on a Friday, and the Saturday is called spending day. On this day the town presents a busy sight. The streets are crowded with miners and their wives making purchases, and a tremendous amount of beer and other liquors is consumed. They are a peculiar people. They seem rough enough, but there is much kindly feeling and warm-heartedness beneath their homely casing. They are surrounded with few of the refinements and beauties of life. Theirs is a hard, perilous task to bring to the light the deep-buried treasures of the dark and silent pit.

They are intensely clannish and not over-delicate in expressing their opinions about either men or things. All have a darkish rim under the eyes. Many stoop and have rounded shoulders, and rheumatic and chest affections are pretty common. One Saturday I took a drive out to Wallsend, in which populous township there are perhaps congregated more miners than in any other of the numerous villages round the city. There was a football match being contested between the local club and the one from Newcastle. There were many very ludicrous incidents, and as the ground was sloppy, and had several deep pools of water standing in the various hollows, the players were soon covered with mud from head to foot. During the game there was a contested point, over which a good deal of excited talk arose. The on-lookers were intensely partisan, and as the contest waxed hotter and ended in a struggle for possession of the ball, they could restrain themselves no longer. Imagining there was a fight going on, they burst all bounds, crowded on to the course, and began hustling the Newcastle men off

the place. In vain their own players expostulated; in vain the umpires shouted, commanded, pleaded, and protested. It was of no use, the miners were on their own dunghill, and were not to be baulked, and were only restored to good humour and prevailed on to leave the players alone, after half an hour's fierce wrangling and contention, during which the strangers had to submit to some rather rough handling.

But for the dense black tea-scrub bordering the race-course, one could have fancied himself in the heart of a mining village at home. At one end a number of youths were engaged in shinty, a sort of polo on foot. With their fur head-dresses, Scotch caps, and fustian habiliments, they reminded me of long-forgotten scenes on the village-common in Scotland.

Quoits seem to be the favourite amusement of the miners. Before every public-house a brawny youth or two, with arms bared to the elbow, may be seen poising the polished "discus," and with unerring aim hurling it straight for the iron pin that marks the goal. The old-fashioned game of fives, too, seems to command the suffrages of a goodly number of the young men. Cricket also has its votaries. Horse-racing is largely patronized, and the mysterious game of knurr and spell is advertised in the miner's favourite medium, the *Newcastle Morning Herald and Advocate*. It consists in a ball being let out of a trap, much in the same way as a pigeon at pigeon-shooting. The player tries to hit the ball as it bounds from the trap, and some benefit is supposed to accrue if he succeeds in making good his aim. No one in the town seems to have a clear idea of what the game really is, and to this day I have not been initiated into its mysteries.

The valley of the Hunter is admirably fitted for semi-tropical productions, and very fine fruits and crops are grown by the farmers. Several large vineries and tobacco gardens are to be met at intervals along the river, and good wine is made in the district. In New England, farther to the north up by Armadale and Tenterfield, the grapes are magnificent in the season, and scarcely to be surpassed anywhere for either size, quantity, or flavour.

The coal-pits at Wallsend and those of the Australian Agricultural Company are about the largest in the district. They give employment to over 1000 men between them, and there are nearly 100 horses employed underground hauling trucks and strips. In many places where the workings have been abandoned and the tunnels have fallen in, the surface of the hill looks as if it had been rent and riven by some tremendous earthquake. Here as elsewhere the Chinamen have established small colonies. They are the market-gardeners and hawkers of the place. Their gardening is superb. They make the ground grow almost anything. Personally they are filthy, but their vegetables are swelling, succulent and sweet. One celestial with a very filthy skin told me he could make about 2*l.* per diem with his cart and horse. There can be no question of the fact. I think that the white man could do just as well, and better, if to his energy and strength and intelligence he would add the plodding patience, the unflagging industry, and laudable thrift of his Mongolian rival. These children of the sun, too, are most tenacious of any hold they can get. They are an independent lot, and with wonderful pertinacity stick to their point till it is gained. Their usually placid temper, however, seems to be ruffled

when the boys take to calling them Irishmen. What there is between Pat and John which calls forth such manifestations of temper and mutual dislike I know not, but a Chinaman here is mortally insulted when you call him Paddy and repudiates the connexion with bitter scorn.

Land here, too, as in the vicinity of all colonial towns has immensely increased in value, and has got into the hands of a few monopolists who stand terribly in the way of needed reforms. The miners are fierce democrats and out-and-out radicals. They are keen politicians, and shortly after my arrival in the colony they returned a representative of their own to parliament, and were taxing themselves to pay him a salary of 300*l.* per annum, which they guaranteed him. This arrangement, however admirable as it might be in theory, did not work well in practice. A paid delegate may be all very well if the general funds support him, but the weekly sixpence was found to be a burden, and soon became small by degrees and beautifully less, till it ceased altogether. The numbers of public-houses strike one with amazement. The houses of the miners are rude and miserable-looking in the extreme. The proprietors of the pits allow their workmen, I believe, to erect a house, and live rent-free on their ground, so long as they continue connected with the pit. The hovels run up are wretched. The walls are rough, upright, undressed posts. The roof consists of ragged sheets of bark held in place by morticed beams, set astride the ridge pole and tied at the eaves. The chimney is a fearful and wonderful construction of earth, clay, battered tin, old iron piping and shingles. There are few cottage gardens, and yet the land is fertile and easily worked. The miner will

not, or cannot, take the trouble to grow his own vegetables, and the Chinaman steps in and gets rich in supplying the welcome products of his trim garden to the very customers who ought to be revelling in such delicacies, each from his own garden-plot.

The pits do not in general work full time, as shipping requirements are rather less than the output of the mines; but in addition to the mines there are several breweries, tanning and fell-mongering yards, potteries, smelting works, vineyards, and other industries, all of which give employment to large numbers of workmen. Then, again, the shipping provides for many more; so that altogether there is a very large working population, and the city and district are the very hotbed of radicalism and ultra-democratic notions. Let not the retired Anglo-Indian therefore settle near Newcastle.

CHAPTER XX.

A trip to Lake Macquarrie—Beauty of the forest—First view of the lake—Boating and fishing—Our Charon—Destructive fishing—Pot-shooting—Want of a close season—Musk ducks—Black swans—The heads at the lake—Chinaman colonists—Scenery—Oysters—Their excellence and abundance—Present system of oyster culture crude and wasteful—Importance of the industry—Plans in vogue elsewhere—What might be done in Australia—Present apathy and neglect.

As Sydney is possessed of a pet lion in her glorious harbour, so Newcastle possesses a masterpiece of nature's handiwork in the lovely Lake Macquarrie. The incessant query at Sydney—"Have you seen the harbour?" "What do you think of our harbour?"—gives place in Newcastle to the question, "Well, have you been out to the lake yet?" It is called *the* lake *par excellence*, and it is certainly a lovely spot. As a Newcastle man, I of course pinned my faith to the Lake, and had not been long in the coaly city before I took occasion to form an estimate of its superlative beauties from actual inspection. Speaking, then, as a Newcastle man, let me ask the reader to accompany me on a trip to Lake Macquarrie.

Leaving the dusty, dull, deadly city, therefore, to its petty squabbles and jealousies, its sins and its smells, we plunge into the bush, rattle through Adamstown, getting a glimpse of fine thriving breeds of

white-haired children and curly-tailed pigs, as we stop for an instant to inquire our road. On we go now through a winding labyrinth of prostrate trees and dense scrub, intermingled with patches of luxuriant fern and lovely arcades of evergreen creepers, festooning the forest verdure, till we breast the steep hill, and find ourselves in Charlestown.

Here we halt and refresh our thirsty souls with shandy-gaff, then on again we go, past trial shafts, a steep tramway, and all the busy evidences of mineral wealth and mining skill, and now the bush becomes truly sylvan, and speaks to every sense with a thousand-tongued voice of wondrous harmony and beauty.

Here are great waving clumps of flax-like leaves, at whose feet nestle delicate woodland flowers of most fragile loveliness of form and fairy extravagance of hue—white blossoms nod at you from tiny pedestals. Blue-eyed violets and pink sprays peep at you from beneath a feathery fern. Straggling clusters of blue, yellow, and lilac wreathe the heathery-tufted tangle below, and the white aromatic bloom rests on the tops of the tea-trees like fleecy flakes of snow. In the dell to the right is a cluster of cabbage-palms and enormous ferns, and on the bole of an ancient tree a stag-horn fern has found a footing and flaunts his banner to the passer-by.

Every yard of the way discloses fresh woodland beauties, and were there only a decent road, the drive would be perfect; even as it is, it is most delightful. As we proceed, we see far to the left the glint of flashing wave, and hear the murmur and never-ending refrain of the throbbing sea, as it dashes against the base of Redhead Point. As we top the last rise, we see

a silvery shimmering sheen, flooding our eyes with a dazzling light through the rays that dart athwart the trunks of the forest. It is a calm, placid scene of still beauty and utter rest, and with a sigh of pleasure you exclaim, "There lies the lake!"

It is not till you emerge, however, from the trees that the full beauty of the landscape unfolds itself. Right at your feet lies a magnificent reach of water; scarce a ripple disturbs its glassy stillness. The water is pellucid as a crystal spring, and you fancy the eye can detect the smallest weed in the cool grottoes and emerald haunts far below. A belt of the loveliest most delicate green—like corn-leaves when the first shoot emerges from the humid soil—circles the shore. This is streaked with bars of amber and gold, and patches of darker green, showing where the yellow sands invite one to try a cooling plunge, and the fantastic forms of the seaweed give cover to innumerable shoals of the frisking finny tribe. Further out lies the deep water of the lake, reflecting back from its bosom of deepest cobalt blue the rays of the fierce November sun, as from a polished disc of metal. The deep dark blue is beautiful. It harmonizes so well and yet contrasts so splendidly and abruptly with the pale green and golden belt, that it forms, in my opinion, one of the finest studies of colour about the whole place. Far to the left stretches the magnificent blue expanse. Bold bluffs and swelling undulations, clothed with the dark green uniform of the sombre bush, come down to the water's edge or rise abruptly from the strand; distant coves and creeks and inlets, and broad sheltered bays are fringed with the same border of forest green, and over distant hill and valley lies a bluish-purple haze; while a few fleecy clouds

gently chasing each other to the southward, and an all-prevailing subdued summer hum from countless tiny "wood-notes wild," give a finish to one of the most perfect visions of quiet sequestered beauty it has ever been my lot to witness. Every ingredient of a landscape is here in perfection—bush, beach, rock, water, cloud. A sail is not even wanting to perfect the beauty of the picture, and the little ketch looks perfectly lovely as she slowly floats along, making for the Heads, beyond Pelican Island.

We descend at Williamson's. Everything is trim, neat, clean, and cosy. The grape-vines look flourishing in the vineyards below, the paddock contains some sleek-looking cows and skittish calves, and down on the beach we see several handy, well-found boats, suggesting pleasant ideas of piscatorial sport. It is truly an arcadia of beauty, and a residence at the lake is the finest tonic that the jaded and fagged city victim could take, to give a fillip to his system, and restore the faded vigour of mind and body.

Our horses are soon put up. An old acquaintance hurries up to greet us. Mutual inquiries and compliments pass.

"The boat is all ready below, sir."

"All right."

"Never mind lines; there are plenty in the boat."

"Ah, well, I must take my gun."

"Yes; you may get some ducks or swan, and I saw pelican this morning, but they're too shy now. There's too much shootin', ye see, sir, now-a-days, and they won't let ye get near them."

By this time we are seated in the smart, clean boat.

"Do many sportsmen visit the lake, then?"

"Oh, you see, sir, there are so many new townships started round about lately, and every pot-walloper now can beg, borrow, or buy a blazing old gun; and, of course, work is sometimes slack, so the miners make up a party, five or six on 'em together. They can get a boat—lots o' boats about Cockle Creek, and it's only three miles from Wallsend; so down they come, ye see, sir, an' they blazes away at everything they see—it don't matter to them whether they are within range or not."

"Well, but you can't stop men from following sport if they can get it!"

"Oh, no, sir; I wouldn't stop *sportsmen*, but I don't call them 'ere sportsmen. Why, bless ye, there's some on 'em as couldn't hit a haystack; an' then they never thinks o' shootin' fair. Now I think there ought to be some protection to birds when they are sitting, and the young 'uns ought to get fair play. Why, sir, the birds are goin' right away from the place altogether. I remember down by the Shoalhaven there, and the Illawarra Lakes, ay, sir, and on this very lake, too, when you could go out of a mornin' and you could not see the water, it was that black with ducks. A few years ago a man could go out on this very water, and bring back his two or three dozen in an hour."

"Could he, really?"

"Yes, sir; and now he might go out for days and not kill a bird. They won't come to breed if they get no rest. Why, sometimes you'll hear them blazin' guns going night and day. In some parts to the south, when a saw-mill is started, a dozen hands or so gets about the place. They have never, maybe, seen a gun in their lives, so they buy some jumped-up thing off of an old pawnbroker, and there they are, set

up as big as bull beef. Every minnit they ain't workin' they are blazin' at them onlucky birds, and they are skeerin' them right away from the country."

"That's very bad," I remark.

"Bad, sir? Lor' bless ye, that's nothin'; I've seen them get an old junk gun with a mouth like a cannon, and blaze right away among the ducks till the water was covered with 'em. More'n half was only wounded, and them they would kill with flails; and hundreds would get away, an' pine till the hawks boned 'em."

I probably looked astonished and a little incredulous, as I certainly was.

"It's gospel truth, sir!" said my comrade, who was getting rather excited, "and it's the same with the fish."

"How so?" I inquired.

"Why, sir, there ain't no fish now to what there was. There's no big schnapper in the lake now, sir, and where ye could take yer three and four dozen an hour a few years ago, ye may think yerself lucky if ye catch a couple of little 'uns now."

"Well, how do you account for that?"

"Them Chinamen, sir. You see there's no one to stop them. Gentlemen like you won't be bothered to go to court and witness agin 'em. Then, even if they are caught, the fine ain't much. Well, sir, they're cunnin'; they watch an old fisherman, sir, till they see where he gets most fish; then some fine night off they goes with their nets—an' such nets, sir! not a thing can escape them! They are small in the mesh, and forty or fifty feet in the bunt. They sweep everything before them, and I say it's unfair, and an infernal shame."

I have made inquiries, and I find every word my informant uttered is true. Our wild fowl are disappearing fast, and the deterioration to our fisheries has already reached alarming bounds.

What is the remedy? Is it in vain to ask our murderous owners of guns to desist from their indiscriminate unsportsmanlike slaughter? We much fear vanity and ignorance are too much for the wild fowl, and humane motives are sneered at. Might not sportsmen's societies be formed as in other parts of the world, whose object it would be to secure a close season, and fair rules for both shooting and fishing?[1] Experience and self-interest, no less than humanity, fair play, and loyal sport,—all call aloud for the observance of a close season. And if sportsmen themselves cannot secure it, then a gun-tax should be levied, and shooting out of season be made penal. Every true sportsman will agree with me; and as for those Cockney "gunnists" whose aim is only to burn powder, make a loud report, and frighten, if they can't kill, harmless kingfishers, woodpeckers, and others of the tiny feathered warblers of our bush, they ought to be put down *vi et armis*, and be scouted by every honest, loyal, good fellow, who has the atom of a sportsman's soul within him.

So with our fish. There should be more stringent rules and stricter supervision. This exhaustion of our fish supply is a very imminent and weighty peril. By a careless apathetic disregard of a plain duty; a reckless abandonment of an onerous responsibility; and a callous, careless indifference to great future interests Government are allowing our fine fishing capabilities to be ruthlessly destroyed, and are casting

[1] Since writing the above an Animals Protection Bill has been passed. See Appendix, Note C.

away a grand food supply, and certain source of a great future revenue and a splendid industry,—from want of the most common and simple precautionary measures.

To come back, however, to our cruise. We were now near the centre of the lake, Anderson's Point directly abeam, when my attention was directed to some large black objects on ahead. I was told they were musk ducks, and we steered for them at once. These musk ducks are rather large animals, with a brownish black plumage, and a shining, glossy black head. They are unable to fly, but dive and swim with great celerity. The only way to get a fair shot at them is to run them down if possible. If they get up under the bow of the boat, they seemingly forget their presence of mind, and, in their flurry, try to escape by scuttling along the water at a prodigious rate. They are then easily shot. We were lucky enough to secure one. We found it to be a male. These have a large glandular receptacle, not unlike a dewlap in oxen, which contains a quantity of very pungent musk. One pouch contains over several ounces occasionally.

Keeping free, we now bore down to a point where several of our Newcastle friends had established a camp. We were not fortunate enough to find them at home, but sundry empty bottles, battered tins, candle ends, and other débris, showed us that our friends carried a few of the more marked appliances of civilization with them. The camp presented a solitary appearance. Close by in the hollow was a well where some pioneer had many a time slaked his thirst. It was quite close to the beach, and though the water within was sweet and wholesome, it yet rises and falls

with the water of the lake, showing the hidden influences at work below the surface. Here we came on a clump of wild raspberries, which, so far as flavour went, proved to be Dead Sea fruit. Why is it that Australia's wild fruits are all but tasteless? her wild birds all but songless? her wild flowers all but scentless? It is a strange problem.

A remark of mine, about leaving so many valuables exposed to the cupidity of any chance passer-by, elicited a strange outburst from our comrade.

"Ah, sir," said he, "them diggin's has done a deal o' harm. I remember when never a hut in the back country had lock on door. Everything was open, and, if anything was stole, Lor' bless ye! the whole back country would unite to hunt down the thief, and, if they caught him, they would crucify him.

"Ah, now, ye see, sir, when a diggin's breaks out. There's too many comes, do ye see, and all sorts too. A man can't afford to feed whole crowds, and then he sometimes gets little thanks, and so it comes about that he had to stop keepin' open house, but it's the loafers does it. The right sort are always civil and honest, an' willing to pay for even a crust o' bread, but among such a crowd there's bound to be some bad uns, and they get the whole lot a bad name."

Our friend was unconsciously describing the inevitable advance from a primitive to a highly complex form of society. We could moralize on his pithy sentences, but we are on pleasure bent.

"Would you like to see the Heads, sir?" asks our friend.

"The very thing," we exclaim.

Re-embarking and leaving the lonely camp, we stretch across a glorious reach of lovely water.

Rounding Pelican Island, we descried a flock of black swan stretched out *en echelon*, and all on the alert.

"Can't we get a shot?"

"No, sir, they're too wary; they will not let you come within range."

We have our old trusty tiger rifle in the boat, and determine to make a trial shot.

I took a long careful aim. The range was over 200 yards. Getting in line with a black clump, I fired into the centre of the swans, and had the satisfaction of seeing two floundering helplessly in the water.

"Well done!" cries my friend.

"Look-out!" shouts the boatman, fairly excited. "They'll come round the corner of the bluff, and you will get another shot."

My friend was ready with his gun, and, as the alarmed flock of swans came round with a graceful sweep, his piece went bang! bang!! and another long-necked one flopped helplessly into the water. We had then some long-range firing at pelican. The old rifle was very near a hit several times, but failed to score.

The sail down the channel to the Heads is lovely in the extreme. It is narrow, and shoals rapidly on either side. Chinamen's huts meet the eye half-way down the reach, with all the evidences of a busy fishing industry round the place. "An ancient and fish-like smell" pervades the atmosphere for yards around. Over the door are quaint Chinese figures and inscriptions, while inside an oil lamp burns before the joss or fane, and Chinese lanterns, curious carvings, tawdry spangled slips of pith and paper, are mixed in a jumbled-up heterogeneous manner with Brummagem clocks, tinware, steel forks, wooden spoons, and patent candles. It is a strange jumble. Outside was a trim

garden, well stocked with vegetables, and a host of cackling hens, looking plump enough to satisfy the greediest glutton.

Down by the heads the current sweeps over the bar, swift and clear, the surf thunders incessantly on the outlying rocks, and the sea birds, red bills, cormorants, gulls, and others, wheel and circle overhead in eddying, circling flight.

On our way back we were caught in a tremendous squall—the water hissed up under our gunwale as we careered madly along; and at one time we thought we should never reach the shore. We were bows under, and the boat half full. We were ably handed, however; and, barring a little wet, we were none the worse for our perilous experience.

But how shall I describe further the charming mornings, the calm delightful days, the magnificent evenings? Everything was lovely and still; and every moment free from care, unless when thoughts of printer's "copy" intruded themselves. Some of the sunsets were gorgeous—when the sun was sinking in his crimson bed, dipping his chariot of fire behind the blue and hazy ridge far to the west; the lake seemed then a carmine sea of blood streaked with bars of amber and deepest purple; while in shore the dark masses of the woods lay reflected in black, and cerulean blue, and hazy depths of grey. The colours chased each other from pearly opaline silvery tints, merging into gold, amber, and crimson, till the old sun would sink to rest, and the whole lake would lie buried in gloomy leaden hue beneath us.

To see the tempest king, too, gather up his forces, and riding on his cloud of storm, dart his lightnings athwart the gloomy lowering sky, while the wind

hissed over the bosom of the lake, driving its waters into clouds of foam, was a no less magnificent spectacle. We were fortunate in seeing both phases in their extremes. There is no tameness, or sameness, or monotony here. The landscape varies as a woman's moods, but an air of beauty ever hovers over all.

Like all the inlets, bays, estuaries, and shoal waters on the coast, Lake Macquarie produces very fine oysters. These delicious bivalves are no rarity in Australia. You can buy a sackful of them for a few shillings, but here again slip-shod legislation and short-sighted greed are doing their best to exhaust the native supplies of natives, and little has been done to supplement the natural beds by artificial "claires" or any system of oyster culture whatever. The Hon. Thomas Holt has indeed experimented long and enthusiastically in the George's River, and at Cook's River, near Sydney. His success has been such as to warrant the belief that this might yet under wise administration, practical skill, and experienced management, become an immense industry, equally profitable to the grower as to the owner of the sea-boards, be they private gentlemen or governmental board. At present a few men alone possess the right of oyster fishing. There are only the natural beds, and these are worked at the will of the lessee, without regard to certain deterioration and eventual cessation of an oyster supply altogether. The toiling, moiling fishermen to whom they sub-let their contracts, only get from three to four shillings per bag from the contractors. A bag contains about three bushels, or on a rough average about eighty dozen oysters. The wholesale buyers purchase a bag at an average rate of one pound sterling per bag. The average retail price

is, we will say, one shilling per dozen, often much more, so that the public have to pay some three hundred per cent. more than a reasonable price for this wholesome and very favourite comestible.

There is perhaps no industry in the world capable of such quick development and speedy return in hard solid profit. Our natural advantages are second to none, but it is a well-known fact that our oyster supply is deteriorating fast, and stands in danger of failing altogether, and this simply from pure neglect and mismanagement. In 1877, a Commission, of which Mr. Farnell, the late Premier, was a member, collected a mass of valuable information, from which the desirability of passing a comprehensive Oyster Fishery Act is clearly demonstrable. The first and most important step would be to have a close season for oysters. At home, by the Fisheries (Oyster, Crab, and Lobster) Act, 1877, a close time for Deep Sea Oysters is fixed from 15th June to 4th August; and for all other kinds of oysters from 14th May to 4th August. This Act applies to England and Scotland, but not to Ireland. By the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868, fishing for oysters is prohibited from the 16th June to the 31st August inclusive, in that part of the English Channel comprised between a line drawn from the North Foreland Light to Dunkirk, and a line drawn from the Land's End to Ushant—the territorial seas of England and France alone being excepted. This close time, however, cannot be enforced till the convention between England and France, included in the Act, is ratified; and till that is done, the convention concluded in 1839, which prohibits oyster-fishing in these limits from 1st May to 31st August, is to remain in force so far as French fishermen are con-

cerned. In Ireland, the Act 5 and 6 Vict. cap. 106 prescribes that no oysters may be caught between 1st May and 1st September, though this close season may be varied by the Inspectors of Fisheries. Some interested, and therefore prejudiced parties here in New South Wales seem to be bitterly opposed to the adoption of some such close season as the above for our oyster beds. The only reason—a very puerile and ridiculous one—being that they say the Australian oysters are different to those of any other part of the world.

Besides being absurd, this contention is simply incorrect. The same skill, intelligence, expenditure and care, which have established such splendidly profitable fisheries elsewhere, could do the same in Australia. At Baltimore, for instance, the oyster trade is so lucrative and important, that our resident consul there, in a statement furnished to Lord Clarendon in 1868 or 1870, tells us that even at that time the trade in oysters from that one port amounted to 2,500,000*l.* sterling; and further, the export of fresh oysters to northern ports from Chesapeake Bay was little short of an additional 1,000,000*l.* It is the universal custom in Europe, and in America, from the Rio Grande to the St. Lawrence, to have a close season of five months. Were it not for that, the beds, as our beds are rapidly showing, would have been destroyed long ago. The capabilities of the Hunter River and other localities on the Australian coasts under a proper system are practically unlimited. At New York and Rhode Island, some time since, the beds were getting exhausted, so that lately new beds had to be made by putting down dry shell and forming artificial beds. This material we have here in any quantity, and it is the best for the purpose. Soft ground, such as pre-

vails in the Hunter, forms beds of astounding productiveness. Moderate yet reliable calculations show that in a very few years' time the Hunter River Oyster Fishery alone, conducted on the European or American scale and model, would produce, in fresh and tinned oysters, an annual income of 300,000*l.*, and afford employment to many hands.

The demand is constantly on the increase, not only in the neighbouring colonies, but all over the world. The quantities of preserved oysters that find their way into New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria, Sydney, Queensland, and South Australia, are enormous, and represent thousands of pounds that might be realized by native industry. With a close season, a stipulation and gauge as to size, so as to exclude immature oysters, with proper supervision and careful management, this industry might become one of the most profitable in the colony. Inspectors for all natural beds should be appointed, and surreptitious fishing on artificial beds should, as in England, be declared a larceny. Wise regulations might be framed to grant leases, the present leases and monopoly to terminate. Fishermen might be made to pay a royalty to Government on each bag, and every encouragement should be given for the formation of artificial beds, by leasing foreshores and similar desirable sites on easy terms. The whole subject merits the deepest and most careful consideration.

There are, too, several kinds of migratory fishes that visit the coasts in the spawning season, of which little or no use is made. Of these, perhaps the sea mullet is the most important. The oil, spawn, and flesh of this fish may be estimated as at the present market value fetching 10*l.* per ton; and yet I have seen thou-

sands rotting on the beach at Botany Bay, because the fishermen did not wish to cheapen the price in Sydney by an abundant supply, and were too ignorant, or indolent, to utilize the surplus quantity. This fish is perhaps the most valuable in the world, weight for weight, not excepting even the salmon, sturgeon, or sperm whale; and further, from it, under proper manipulation, good *caviare* is capable of being made. Now no use is made of this splendid natural source of wealth. It is capable of rivalling the Wick herring fishery, which, started at the end of last century, by the enterprise of Sir John Sinclair, has gone on increasing in importance until it now averages 800,000*l.*, during a space of from eight to fourteen weeks per annum. In the Hunter River, Shoalhaven, Lake Macquarie and other places along the coast of New South Wales, there are abundant resources for the formation of a trade equal to that of Wick in the future. A Fishery Act is one of the crying wants of our industrial progress. I hope it will be taken up in earnest, and our whole fish supply, and more especially oyster culture be put on a basis in accordance with the lessons of experience, the teachings of science, the requirements of the age, and a due appreciation of our wonderful natural resources, and the development of which they are capable.

CHAPTER XXI.

Deep-sea fishing in Australia—Schnapper-fishing—Acclimatization making progress—The fishing-grounds—My friend Bob—Rock-fishing—Growing scarcity of fish—Bait—Lines—Black bream—Best time for fishing—Best localities—Groper and rock cod—Flat-head and Tailor fish—Gar fish—Sting ray-sharks—Fishing incidents—Leather jackets and green eels—Anecdotes.

APART from the political and economical aspect of the question, the fishing in Australian waters, river, lake, or sea, commends itself to the sportsman, and it is matter of wonder that it is not more generally indulged in by the colonial youths than it is. Indeed, were I asked what kind of sport I considered most easily procurable and most decidedly enjoyable in Australia, I should not be far wrong if I said deep-sea fishing. Schnapper fishing is a never-failing resource of the holiday-maker in New South Wales along the coast, when nothing else in the way of amusement may be procurable. In Sydney and Newcastle there are numerous fishing-clubs, and during the season a small steamer puts out every Saturday laden with enthusiastic disciples of the gentle Walton, and sometimes enormous quantities of fish are caught.

With pleasant company, a good sea-boat, and a gentle swell, not sufficient to create too great a disturbance in the epigastric region, such a mode of spending a holiday is truly delightful. When the captain knows

the ground, or, rather, the water thoroughly, and pilots his craft to some favourite bottom, and hits on a shoal or school of schnapper, grand exercise for the muscles is a certainty. The sharks are sometimes troublesome, and a heavy swell and drifting current may occasionally spoil the sport. But under favourable circumstances, such as I have often enjoyed, schnapper-fishing is worth travelling far to find.

It is commonly supposed that a fishing-rod is rather a useless encumbrance in Australia, and may be discarded altogether from the list of the sportsman's paraphernalia. Most Australians themselves share this supposition, and yet fly-fishing is no rarity in New South Wales. Thanks, too, to the wise and enlightened liberality of such men as Henry Mostyn, the sporting editor of the *Town and Country Journal*, better known to colonial readers as the genial "Pegasus," Walter Bradley, Messrs. Lamb, Lee, and others, acclimatization is gaining ground in public estimation, and when we consider the many magnificent waters now almost wholly tenantless, and innocent of glittering scale or quivering fin, but admirably adapted for pisciculture, we may hope that the welcome whirr of the musical reel as a stately six-pounder dashes up the stream with the cruel barb in his mouth, may yet be heard in many a leafy solitude where hitherto never foot of man hath trod.

Already in Tasmania the noble salmon and the silvery trout have become domiciled. In the Moorabod, a Victorian river, fly-fishing is a reality, the finny prey having already graced the boards of the epicures of the Victoria Club, and a whisper has reached me that in the Cox's River, near Sydney, the plash of a falling trout is not altogether an unknown sound.

In this colony, New South Wales, around its 600 miles of coast, studded with numerous bays and inlets of surpassing beauty, there are excellent opportunities for the lovers of fishing. These opportunities are seized by a goodly number of enthusiasts, it is true, but perhaps they have not received that share of popular attention which the undeniable excellence of the sport merits.

With a well-selected party, plentiful supplies of bait and provisions, and the cares and troubles of business left behind with the smoke of the crowded city, one could enjoy a fishing excursion very much indeed, and the finny inhabitants of our coast waters are ever present in such numbers as to make good sport quite a certainty. One need not go far; the well-known fishing-grounds are numerous within easy distance of Sydney. From Broken Bay to Terrigal, from Curranulla southwards to Port Hacking and Wattamolle, there are splendid fishing-grounds, and the capture of schnapper, jew-fish, taraglin, king-fish, *moora neunigar*, black and red rock cod, morwong, travallay, salmon, and hundreds of other varieties, would give exciting sport of a most enjoyable description. Then, again, in the brackish waters near Lake Macquarie, Toggara, Budgewi, Manburra, and others, there are most plentiful supplies of black bream, tarwine, flathead, whiting, river gar-fish, several varieties of mullet, and vast quanties of schnapper and jew-fish of delicious flavour, and affording capital sport.

In the Monaro district, too, in the Shoalhaven and Snowy rivers, with their affluents, in the top waters of the Murrumbidgee, and in such streams as the Gooburragandra, and the rivers about Bombala, Cooma, Queanbeyan, and Tumut, the Scotch burn trout, would,

we think, be found to thrive well. Perch might be introduced into Lake George, and the lovers of the gentle art might cast their lines in these waters; and, with all the accessories of magnificent scenery, a fine bracing atmosphere, and a glorious climate, enjoy their favourite sport in perfection.[1]

Should they perchance be of that unhappy sort who care not to face the dangers of the deep, then let them try the equally delightful, and often as successful scene, "Out on the rocks," and they will find exercise enough

[1] Indeed a splendid chapter on the Fish food supplies of New South Wales might be written had I more space at my disposal. What we want is a set of active hardy fishermen. Our supply of these is limited. A few Wick fisher-boats, manned by hardy crews, who would not shrink from putting to sea because a capful of wind was blowing, might realize a fortune in a very short time. Sydney is miserably supplied with fresh fish. The demand is intermittent. We want a small steamer, with a deep well in which to keep the fish alive and bring them fresh to market. Fish-curing establishments would be found remunerative undertakings. Millions of herrings teem along our coasts. Our capitalists are apathetic. Our artisans would dearly relish a fish diet, which is about the rarest luxury they are able to procure. Here is an opening for a few plucky pioneers, in which fortunes might be made. I append a few of the more common of our valuable fishes. Hundreds of others might be named. First and foremost comes our king of sea fishes, the schnapper; I can't find the derivation of this name.

Schnapper (*Pagrus unicolor*). There are many species.

Gar-Fish (*Hemirhamphus intermedia*).

Whiting (*Silago maculata*). Delicious fish, very plentiful

Black Bream (*Chrysopterys, Sp.*).

Jew-Fish (*Elacate nigra*).

Salt-water Herring (*Elops saurus*). Very plentiful.

Soles and Flounders (*Pseudoglomphus, Solia,* and *Pardachirus*).

Flat-Heads (*Platycephalus*). Four species of these, all good eating.

Rock Cod (*Julis, Labrus*), and many other species.

Leather Jackets (*Monacanthus*). Many species of these.

Sand Eel (*Ophysthis, serpens, Muscena*). Many species. &c. &c.

for their biceps in dragging the finny inhabitants, whose hunger prompts them to swallow the bait, forth from their cool grots and coral cells.

I was happy in Newcastle in possessing an angling friend, with whom I had many a long yarn, exchanging experiences and recollections. After an unusually unsuccessful afternoon off the point of the breakwater beyond the beetling lonely cone of Nobbys, my trusty crony delivered himself of much wisdom and quaint lore, anent fish and fishing generally. "Thus spoke the ancient fisherman:"—

"Rock-fishing about Newcastle, when I first made acquaintance with it, 1859 to 1864, was very good, but at the present time it has degenerated greatly. Then we could always depend on catching several fine schnapper, besides other fish, if we tried for them; now the fisherman may try time after time and catch nought but sting-rays and sharks. Really good sport now is the exception. The blue-groper still affords pretty fair winter sport. This growing scarcity of fish about the rocks may, I think, be accounted for by the fact that the grounds are being so constantly fished. The great diminution of bait about the rocks may also be a reason. For instance, crabs are the best bait for groper. At one time the fisher could get them anywhere and everywhere about the rocks; now he has to hunt diligently for them, and when found in some deep crack, capture them by means of a fork or straightened hook tied to a long thin stick. The same may be said of the octopus, or star-fish, as it is generally called here, and which, when roasted partially, is regarded as first-rate bait for schnapper and other sea fish. For rock and harbour fishing your lines should be long and strong, colonial made, of hemp or machine thread, and

as light as can be used with safety; they should be at least 100 or 120 yards long, both to enable you to throw out well and to play a big fish when you get one on. They should be light, so as not to frighten the fish, should they be shy, and also to afford opportunity to play the fish and give real sport, for after all the play a fish gives is the chief element of pleasure in fishing."

"That, I dare say, Bob," I rejoin, "may be one of the chief charms in all sport, the excitement and the necessity for the display of skill and dexterity; yet surely among the charms of fishing you would not forget the rare delights of the free open air and the beauties of scenery, which no one more truly appreciates than your veteran angler."

To this my friend gives his willing adhesion, but he is still sore on the subject of thick lines.

"It's all very well," he says, "when the fish are voracious, and there are 'woppers' about, the thick line then comes in handy enough; but surely the man who fishes for sport would prefer the lesser bag, in which every fish represented a certain amount of patient tact and skilful play, to the larger wallet, filled by means of a young clothes' line and main force?"

I can't help agreeing with my friend in such a proposition. Of course, you must have rather a strong line for schnapper, for the strain of a tugging eight-pounder—and even ten-pounders are not at all uncommon—is no joke, as many a cut and bleeding finger can testify. For bream and other smaller fish a common trout line is amply sufficient. The black bream is a magnificent fish, rare eating, and a gallant fighting fish. The best time to catch these is at night, at least I have oftener been successful then. You should also

have, however, a very fine line with gut and small hooks for the capture of tiny fry, as these very often come in as a welcome addition to a scanty supply of bait.

The choice of fish off the rocks is by no means limited. Both deep-sea fish and those who more affect the vicinity of the rocks as their ordinary *habitat*, will afford the fisherman varied and exciting sport. The best bait for the deep-sea fish includes tailor-fish, mullet, salmon, shark, and roasted octopus. Failing these, the small fish caught with the gut line come in handy.

The rock fish, such as groper, rock cod, black perch, bream, &c., prefer crab bait, and any of the various shell fish, which may be large enough to put on the hooks. A favourite bait is known as Congreboys, which is a peculiar animal-vegetable or vegetable-animal, found growing in clusters on the rocks; these can generally be procured in great quantities. Many of the rock fish will also take fish bait, that is, the flesh of other fish. My friend says he has not known the groper so to do, although these have been caught weighing over one hundredweight. I have heard of their being caught with a bait of a peculiar bright green sea-weed, broad, thick, and flat.

The fish on the Australian coast are not, as a rule, very particular as to the time of their biting. In rock fishing I have noticed they always bite better on the flood than at ebb tide, and the early morning and evening will generally afford more successful sport than mid-day.

Amongst the rocks may be observed flats of some extent, pretty clear of loose stones or boulders, but protected by the circling reefs from any great rush of

the breakers. In from one to three feet of water in such places, with a fair current running through them as the waves come and go, capital bream and whiting may sometimes be caught with shell fish, limpet, or crab bait. In some instances I have watched the whiting dash past the bait as if surveying it, return almost instantaneously and swoop down on it at full speed as it repassed.

When out rock fishing, one should always endeavour to select a spot as free as possible from rocks and weeds. A favourable place may generally be chosen without much trouble or difficulty, as on a calm day the bottom can be clearly seen, with every shell and pebble on the sandy bars.

If it is impossible to find clear ground, and it should be necessary to fish on a foul bottom, it is a good plan to fasten hooks and sinker on to snooding, slightly weaker than your fishing-line, so that in the event of your getting foul, you may at least save the line, although the snooding may remain at the bottom of the sea.

Gropers and rock cod, when hooked, always make for the shelter of the rocks, within the ledges, cracks, crannies, and holes innumerable of which they find a ready refuge and a safe retreat. When you hook either of these varieties, then, you should allow as little law as possible. Once they reach the friendly rocks, it is next to impossible to dislodge them. Pulling will not do it, you are almost certain to smash your hook or break your line, but they may sometimes be lured out, by allowing them plenty of slack. They do not seem to feel the hook very much. I have caught bream, on one occasion, with a large schnapper hook sticking in the roof of its mouth. Its advent there must

have been of very recent date, perhaps the day previous, but it seemed but little to incommode the hungry rover.

Continuing his reminiscences, Bob says,—

"The fish in Newcastle Harbour generally bite best at from half ebb to half flood, the best baits are the same as for rock fishing, adding thereto prawns raw and boiled. About 1859 to 1864 shoals of a small fish known here as anchovies, used to visit Newcastle periodically, pursued by all sorts of larger fish. They afforded splendid bait, and when boat fishing, we used to get them by making the larger fish, principally the flat-head, disgorge the anchovies they had swallowed. We could thus procure from three to eight anchovies from each flat-head, although their digestive apparatus seems to work with amazing rapidity. The anchovies were so numerous that thousands of them used to be driven ashore in their efforts to escape, and people fishing from the old stone wharf used to get more than sufficient bait among the stones near the water's edge. People fishing from boats would often be splashed by large fish when after their prey. Once, when fishing off Scott's Point, on such an occasion, one of our party pulled in a large flat-head with the tail of a smaller one sticking several inches out of its mouth; when pulled out, we found all the head quite digested, whilst the shoulders were reduced to a semi-liquid greyish mass. One of us stuck the fragment on his hook, threw out, and as soon as the bait touched water hooked and pulled into the boat another flat-head, nearly as big as the first. He afterwards caught a large salmon with the same bait. From the beach below Nobbys the anchovies could be gathered in bucketfuls. The fishing in the harbour has materially altered of late years,

the most numerous fish now being the jew-fish, which, in those days, was rather a scarce fish in the harbour, being met more frequently some miles up the river. I have had very good sport among the flat-head and tailor-fish, by fly-fishing for them with a bit of mother-o'-pearl fastened to the hook and shaped a little like a fish; they used to take it with a most gallant rush, and so entirely that they often carried away everything, the sharp teeth cutting the line instantly above the hook. To any one trying this I would recommend to tie their hook on to wire gimp. I feel certain that some of these fish could be caught with an artificial fly—say a white one with a bright body, and drawn a little below the surface. The gard-fish, which is the best salt-water fish for the table, may be caught with the hook, although they are usually netted. Using beef or fish bait, I have caught them in good quantities, both in the Hunter, near Hexham, and in Lake Macquarie. When fishing for them I have noticed they were invariably hooked in the long jaw, the lower one. I have no doubt they could be caught with the fly, as I observed that they took the bait most readily when it was moving, and left it whenever it sank a few inches below the surface. The best fly to take them with should, I think, be red or white, and very small. As in rock so in harbour fishing, the lines should be light and long, and the sport will be better should the sharks be about and you desire sport with them; a good length of signal halyards, with shark hook and chain, such as can be purchased at any tackle shop, makes a first-rate line. You should never give your shark time to gorge the bait, but strike directly he bites, otherwise he may swallow both hook and chain and cut the line above them. Opinions as to hooks differ considerably, but

it is best to be supplied plentifully with various sizes, from that known as the schnapper hooks downwards. Some men prefer the 'Kirby' hook, others the 'Limerick,' the latter is I think the most favoured. I have also found the gravitation cod hook a very good one; it holds the fish well; and owing to its greater length of shank saves the line in a measure from being cut by the sharp teeth possessed by most of the sea fish.

"There are great diversities of opinion as to the table virtues of the sea fish. Schnapper, bream, whiting, gard-fish, flounders, flat-heads, &c., each have their advocates. I have met a few bold spirits who have tried shark, and who say that the wings of the sting-ray are very good eating, tasting more like chicken than fish. This I am quite content to take on trust, and would prefer the chicken. Many of the sea fish, however, though poor for the table, afford capital sport. Than a sting-ray it is not possible to have a gallanter fighting fish; he battles to the last; he dashes straight out, tears off sideways, swims round the boat, breaches out of the water, and when getting tired out presents his whole wide front to the water, or dives straight to the bottom and anchors himself by the suction power of his great width of under surface. In the latter case, as an attempt to haul him off by force might endanger the line,—a good plan, if he won't yield, is to slack off: when fancying himself free he will soon be off again, but with diminished power. So bravely do they fight that I have seen a sting-ray still fighting with the hook torn through his jaw and half-way down his belly. The salmon, jew-fish, and almost all the others, afford good sport in ratio to their size and the lightness of the line. The salmon so called is not, I believe, in any way similar to the true salmon, except, perhaps, as

regards his mode of procedure when hooked. He travels about in a most eccentric fashion and is very often more out of the water somersaulting than in it.

"Sharks afford good sport when they are not too big and too numerous, in either of which cases they usually have all the fun to themselves, and are not to be driven away. A grey nurse shark once kept two of us employed nearly all day supplying him with hooks and sinkers. He was about eight or nine feet long, and first got on my line; he graciously permitted me to pull him close up to the rock I was standing on, when he bit the hook off, and swam slowly past my rock and back again, not ten feet from me, with a Wont-you-come-into-my-parlour sort of an expression in his eye. After that he made matters very lively for us, sometimes taking both hooks from a line, sometimes the sinker only, which was fastened on below the hooks. We once had him on a large line with chain tackle, and got him half on the rock; but a wave slewed him round, and the line either got across his jaw or cut on the rocks, and off he went. That episode, however, by no means satisfied him, for he soon returned and renewed his attentions, carrying off with him more large hooks, and two lots of about eighteen inches of brass wire. He regularly beat us, and when we left for home he was still to the fore. In spite of his awkward attentions we got several fine schnapper, one weighing 14½ lbs. As a set-off to this, we afterwards caught a shark in Newcastle harbour, eight feet six inches long, and six feet in girth, which towed us about two miles about the harbour before we caught it.

"Sharks are all savage, and will, when being caught, rush at their captor if he gives them a chance. The

hammerheads are especially vicious, and I've seen a small one, about eighteen inches or two feet long, after being pulled into the boat and knifed, snapping savagely, and making vicious attempts to get at the occupants of the frail craft. The Wabbegong or tiger-shark is a sulky monster. An acquaintance was on one occasion preparing to land on one of the islands in Port Stephens. The water was shallow, and he could not get his boat up to the shore. As he was preparing to wade he caught sight of a Wabbegong close to the boat. Knowing the nature of the beast, he tried to drive him away with the sprit, but the 'tiger' only worried it savagely. A large lump of lead ballast thrown at him was treated similarly, and he only left when very roughly treated.

"Two well-known miners here (they are nearly all fishermen) were once observed standing on a rock facing a deep hole, known as the 'Lobster Hole,' and just out of water. A. was dipping his naked foot in and out of the water, whilst every now and then a large wabbegong would rise up sluggishly, open-mouthed, after the foot, and B. would endeavour to spear him with the butt-end of a spotted-gum sapling he had been using as a fishing-rod, A. occasionally remarking, 'Look out, Tom, we'll have the thief this time.' Unfortunately neither party got the other. The same fellow who was thus angling for the shark with his naked foot, had, on a former occasion, caught a wabbegong not far from the same spot. After carefully killing the fish, and extracting his hook, he proceeded, after the manner of many conquerors, to insult his fallen foe. He kicked it on the nose, and jeered at it; but whilst so doing the jaws unclosed just in time to admit his foot, and closed

again on it, and he bears the marks, and will bear them to his death. His mates can always track him along the beaches by his distorted track.

"Perhaps though, the greatest nuisances to the rock fisher are the leather-jackets and green eels. The former is a fish of many and brilliant colours, chiefly blue and yellow, a sharky skin, a moveable spine on top of his head, and large square-cutting teeth in his jaws, with which, on ordinary occasions, he calmly and deliberately worries off the bait from the hook. He is not easily caught, and when caught is about worthless, although I've heard of epicures who say that a dish of leather-jackets' livers is, of all fish dishes, the best. The green or rock eel, is a fiend, with long jaws full of sharp teeth; his fashion is to swallow the hook very quietly, sneak under a rock, and weave himself and the line into a maze worse than that of the web of the Lady of Shalot. I once got served thus: the eel got on a line I had neglected for a few minutes; when I pulled in my friend, I had to cut his head off before I could free my line, about five feet of which he had tangled so tightly round himself, and in and out of his jaws, that he was fairly caught in a mesh of his own weaving, for he had bitten the line through in at least two places. They are great savages, and I have seen two, after being caught and banged on the rocks to quiet them a little, so as to render safe the operation of removing the hook, lock their jaws together, tie themselves into a knot, and fight like a couple of bull-dogs. They may be often found camping in the shallow holes in the rocks; and I know of an instance where one took hold of the fingers of a friend who was feeling in the holes for sea eggs (echinus). My friend got his

finger away, but only because the teeth were too sharp to hold, and split it clean down. I have seen one, whilst being hauled up, make a furious snap at the line, and cut a great gash in his own body; and I heard of an instance where a boy wisely put his finger into the gaping jaws of a newly decapitated head; the said jaws instantly closed, and the wretched larrikin ran howling up and down the rocks with the 'dead head' hanging fast. The fisherman quickly went to his assistance, but the only way in which he could release the finger was by splitting the jaws completely down, and removing them one at a time.

"The sharks sometimes prove a great source of annoyance to the fisherman by taking his hooked fish as he is pulling them up. He hooks a fine schnapper—he knows it is a schnapper by the determined way in which his captive tugs and jags at his line. He hauls away at him, with pleasant visions floating before his mind's eye, of a beautiful boil, with sauce to match, when away goes his line at railway speed for ten or twenty yards, cutting his fingers, and filling his heart with dire forebodings. Suddenly all strain relaxes, and he pulls into the boat, easily and sadly, the head only of the fish that had but just filled his heart with joyful expectations, and excited his salivary glands to excretion. In a case of this sort you may occasionally be permitted to land a whole fish, but generally the only plan is to be away to fresh woods and pastures new; and often that, too, is useless, as friend shark, finding any one good-natured enough to catch his fish for him, will abide with him as long as he continues to do so, and often, not content with conveying to himself your fish, will also take a fancy to your baits, no matter how small and insignificant they may be; and

to pull up an eight or nine feet shark on an ordinary schnapper or bream line would be a labour beyond both the strength and wisdom of Hercules.

"I have known a good-sized shark take the bait, consisting of a small prawn on a bream line, and, having bitten off the hook, follow up the line, and take the sinker; and I have seen a shark travelling off across the stream with two lines from different boats fishing near to each other.

"There now," said Bob, "I think I have about exhausted my recollections and experiences; but there's one piece of advice I would give ye, if you do not already know it."

"What's that?"

"Well, it's just the opposite of what Cromwell used to tell his Roundheads. Whenever fishing where you are likely to hook big fish *keep your powder*, *i.e. your line* WET, or you may find it the nearest approach, without being the exact thing, to hanging on to a red-hot wire. The trying to hold a dry line when fizzing at the rate of sixty miles an hour through your hands, and burning, rather than cutting into them, is not exactly a thing of joy. Lastly, when returned from fishing, always remove your hooks, and spread out your lines to dry. Hardly anything rots a line sooner than does rust, and but a slight touch of it on your line may lead to the loss of half of it, and, worse still, of a fine fish lost through carelessness. A line carefully dried, and properly attended to, will last more than twice as long as one rolled up wet, and allowed to sweat itself dry. A line dried in the latter fashion goes rotten all through, and can never be depended on."

CHAPTER XXII.

Fresh-water and fly-fishing in Australia—Varieties—Native modes of fishing—The fresh-water tortoise—Spearing fish—The fish of the Western waters—The Platypus—The fresh-water eel—Perch and herring—Fly-fishing on the Hunter—Fishing notes by Bob—Shooting—Sport on the Lachlan—Varieties of wild fowl—Pigeons—Character of the country—Incidents of duck-shooting—Deterioration of the sport—Pot-shooting—Necessity for conservation—Snipe in Hexham Swamps—Anecdotes—The wood-duck—Its cunning and sagacity—The Australian crow—Anecdotes—The shrike or butcher bird—Sparrow hawk—Magpie—Future prospects of sport—The Acclimatization Society—The Animals Protection Act.

Not only in the fecund lap of the ocean, however, may the disciples of Walton and Cotton find opportunity for the exercise of their pleasurable pastime. The fishing in the Australian rivers, even as they are at present, is not to be derided. All contain fish of various sorts, principally the far-famed Australian fresh-water cod (*Oligorus macquariensis*), better known, perhaps, as the Murray Cod, Perch (*Therapon*) of several species, herrings (*Clupea novæ-hollandiæ*), freshwater mullet (*Mugil dobula*), Gudgeon, a small, brown cod, about six or seven inches long (there are several kinds of cod), and also two kinds of fresh-water tortoises, one of which hath a most horrible, "ancient and fish-like smell," and may be caught often at great distances from the river's brink.

The natives are very expert fishermen, and their methods of capturing fish have a most singular resemblance to many of the modes adopted by the *Mullahs* or fishermen of Behar, with which I am so well acquainted, and which I have described at length in my "Sport and Work on the Nepaul Frontier." Indeed, the points of analogy are so striking as to suggest curious ethnological problems. *Bara Mundi* (*osteoglossum Leitchardti*), for instance, in the native phraseology means a big fish. The Hindoo equivalent for the same is *Bara Muchlee*. However, into the vexed question of the origin of the Australian aborigines I have not space to enter at present. Perhaps some enthusiastic and leisured ethnologist may follow up the bare suggestion here given.

The modes of fishing pursued by the natives are sufficiently interesting to merit a few words. Sir T. L. Mitchell, in his narrative of an expedition to explore the course of the Darling River in 1835, gives some very interesting bits of description. I extract the following:—

"These tribes, inhabiting the banks of the Darling, may be considered ichthyophagi in the strictest sense, and their mode of fishing was really an interesting sight. There was an unusually deep and broad reach of the river opposite to our camp, and it appeared that they fished daily in different portions of it, in the following manner. The king stood erect in his bark canoe, while nine young men, with short spears, went up the river, and as many down, until, at a signal from him, all dived into it, and returned towards him, alternately swimming and diving; transfixing the fish under water, and throwing them on the bank. Others on the river brink speared the fish when thus enclosed,

as they appeared among the weeds, in which small openings were purposely made that they might see them. In this manner they killed, with astonishing despatch, some enormous cod-perch. . . . . After a short time the young men in the water were relieved by an equal number; and those which came out shivering, the weather being very cold, warmed themselves in the centre of a circular fire, kept up by the gins on the bank. The death of the fish, in their practised hands, was almost instantaneous, and seemed caused by merely holding them by the tail, with the gills immersed" (Chap. vi.).

He also, in his expedition in search of the "Kindur" (Darling) in 1831, mentions the native weirs for catching fish, formed of boughs on the water-holes, near the Bogan. He describes the gins as fishing. "A moveable dam of long, twisted, dry grass, through which only water can pass, is pushed from one end of the pond to the other," thus securing all the fish in it. He describes their nets as being made of a kind of flax, and knotted like the English mesh; he also mentions having seen a water-hole poisoned by eucalyptus boughs, thrown into it for the purpose of catching fish. I have seen this done on the Hunter when it had shrunk to water-holes, but the poison there used was a graceful plant growing near the water, with bright green leaves, a reddish stem, and a long, drooping spray of small whitish flowers; it was, I fancy, a species of pepper plant, the leaves, &c., having a hot and peppery taste, and was very severe when applied to the eyes or other tender parts. The method was to throw quantities into the hole; the effect was to sicken the fish, and bring them to the top of the water, when they might be captured,

or knocked ashore with a long stick. I have also seen fish captured in a similar manner by muddying the water-hole. Captain Sturt, the discoverer of the Darling, confirms Mitchell's accounts. I remember being told—I forget my informant—that he had seen the blacks diving empty-handed into the deep holes, and returning with eels &c., fast between their teeth; and I don't doubt his statement.

As to the tortoise, my friend Bob, in a characteristic epistle, writes:—

"The tortoises are not fish, but as they are a nuisance to the fisherman they deserve notice. With their horny bills they nibble and chew at the bait till they either destroy or get it off. It is not easy to hook them, and it is also difficult to get them to acquiesce in their liability to death—I've seen one with his head cut off bolt down the river bank, and swim away—and when caught and killed they do not present an inviting enough appearance to tempt any one but a black fellow to make food of them. I will endeavour to describe the capture of one by a native. The tortoises like the sun and air, and may often be seen, ten or more, sunning themselves on logs in and above the water, or floating in the stream with only their heads out of water, in either case diving on the slightest alarm. My dark friend, hight Mattambong, King of Taingerrin, with whom I had been fishing and shooting all day, remarked, as he pointed to a tortoise floating in deep water, 'Mine been eat that fellow turkle.' He stripped himself, and glided into the water, and floated rather than swam, with just his head visible, out to mid-stream, down which he floated till about ten yards behind the 'turkle,' when he vanished like a shadow; the 'turkle' also disappeared

in a hurried manner—but only for an instant, for the old native rose again almost immediately, with his victim fast in both hands. Biting its head to kill it, he threw it ashore, and following leisurely, built his fire, roasted the tortoise in its shell, and polished it off with great gusto, not unmixed with contempt of me, for declining to join him.

"The blacks also capture fish, principally the mullet, by spearing them, the spear being made of grass-tree with four hardwood points fastened on with stringy bark, kurrajong bark, or cooramin bark, and gum, and kept about two or three inches apart by small wedges of wood inserted between them. After spearing a fish they bite the head to kill it. The spears, I've no doubt, may be seen in the Sydney Museum.

"The fish of the Western waters are, so far as I know them, cod, perch, bream, and cat-fish—no eels, although I hear that of late years a species of small lamprey has been caught in the Murray. I am not aware that any of these fish will rise to the fly, but I think the perch would, as to my unscientific eye they seemed to be identical with the Hunter perch. I have only fished in the Murrumbidgee, the Tumut, the Yeven, Yeverd creek, and a few others of the Murrumbidgee tributaries and in the Lachlan; the bait is similar to that for the Hunter fish—meat, fish, oak-tree grubs, earth-worms, shrimps, &c. The cod, which goes to a great size (I have read of 120 lbs. in the Murray), is a very voracious fish; and I have known more than one occasion, and heard of others, on which a large cod completely swallowed a smaller one, which had been tethered out at night in the river to keep alive and fresh for the morning's breakfast—a necessary precaution of a hot summer's day on the Murrumbidgee.

The largest cod I have seen was 45 lbs., and so fat that it was impossible to eat it; when cooked it seemed to be entirely composed of an oily fat, unpleasant to look at and worse to taste. The smaller sizes, from 3 lbs. to 12 lbs. are the best. The cat-fish is a curious brown fish, with appendages near the gills; but it is so long since I saw them, that I cannot attempt any description of them. The above remarks apply as regards fish and bait to all the northern rivers of the colony which run westerly into the Darling. For this Bob Riley is my authority. The names of the rivers he is acquainted with are—the Peel, the Manilla, best river in the north for perch which run as high as 7 lbs.; the Mooki, a tributary of the Namoi, which contains the largest cod in the northern district; the Gwydyr, or Big river; the Macintyre; the Severn, or Sovran, one of the best northern rivers for both fishing and shooting; and the Bundara, the head of the Gwydyr. Here, Riley says, the river runs through limestone (another authority swears it is granite), and has worn itself a passage under the stratified rocks, so that you may walk across among strange holes and basins in which any quantity of cods, about 4 lbs. may be caught."

That strange paradoxical *lusus naturæ*, the Platypus, too, may often be met with in these northern and western rivers. There are many of them, especially in the Macdonald River. I have myself shot them in Queensland, although I had been told that owing to their powers of rapid diving it was impossible to shoot them. It has a most beautiful fur, and they are often speared by the blacks.

Capital fishing may be had in the upper reaches of the Hunter, and I doubt not, if the experiment were

tried, many valuable species might be here acclimatized successfully, and glorious sport would be the result. Not having fished much in these remoter regions, I cannot do better than again refer the reader to my friend's note-book. Referring seriatim to the watery inhabitants of the Hunter river, he writes me as follows:—

"The freshwater eel when not too fat is a very fine eating fish, and may be taken with a hand-line in the evening or after dark, baiting as follows: fish-bait, frogs, meat, bird's entrails, or a large white grub which lives in colonies in the river oaks, and which may be discovered by the refuse which they eject from their holes. A sharp tomahawk and willing arm will soon extract them. If the blacks are to be believed, they make very good human food. I have known the eels go as high as 13 lbs. and 15 lbs. weight, but those would be coarse eating, and I would recommend 6 lbs. and under as the eel best calculated to please the palate. They can pull pretty strongly, especially if they can twist themselves round any foreign matter, as I once found when pulling up what seemed to me an eel not much smaller than the great world serpent, and which when landed proved to be a three-pounder knotted round a sunken nine-foot rail which had been carried into the hole in flood time. Perch may be taken with much the same bait as eels, adding thereto crickets, mole and black, the larger grasshoppers and locusts, and the large dragon-flies so numerous along the river. These latter, though very shy and swift, may be readily captured in the early morning before the dew dries, as they cannot fly till the sun takes the limp out of their wings. The herring may also be caught in great numbers with bait, such as the smaller grasshoppers, and almost any small insect; I have caught

them with the common house-fly. Both these fish (perch and herring) afford far better sport to the true fisherman, viz., he who uses the artificial fly."

With regard to that most important choice, the best killing and most suitable fly, I have been favoured with a communication from a keen old sportsman and genial man, Dr. Glennie.

"For perch flies," he says, "they should be made on a good-sized hook. The one I have generally found the most killing, is that made with a peacock hurl for the body, red hackle, and for the wings turkey, rather dark, and wood duck combined. I sometimes find a white fly with yellow worsted for body answer well when it is getting about dusk. The best time for catching perch is from sundown to dark, or early in the morning before sunrise. They may be taken all day long in close dry weather, especially if the wind is in the west. The last few years have not been good for fishing; whether it is that the river is more fished than formerly, and has also been very much netted, or that the fish are not so plentiful as of yore, I cannot say. A few years ago, I and two other gentlemen caught 52 lb. one afternoon, and I have landed sixteen within an hour, besides losing as many more. Besides perch, we have the herring, which occasionally affords good sport of an evening, with a small fly made with a red hackle; but even these are not now to be caught so readily as formerly. I have caught eight dozen within an hour, but that was some years ago."

To continue Bob's notes :—

"The hook for perch should be the salmon hook. They have large mouths. The fly should be plain and quiet, the simpler the better, for the perch will not rise to

a gaudy fly. A very good fly may be made as follows—body red, green, yellow, or brown worsted; hackle from a cock's neck; and for wings turkey, guinea fowl, wood duck, or any quiet feather. The fly should not have a tail, nor should the wings project beyond the bend of the hook, or the fish may only rip them and miss the hook. The perch is a cunning fellow, and when hooked always goes for the weed beds or sunken logs, and if he gets there you may say farewell to your fish and hook. I remember, when I was a youngster, a big brute that always beat me. He had his haunt near a big log, hollow, splintery, water-logged, and of huge proportions. Many a time I hooked him, using a fat grasshopper for bait; but he was never far from his log, and he always made his rush for it, and whether he got under, or round, or into it, I could never find out, for he invariably escaped and took my hook with him. He is a bold-biting fish, whether at bait or fly, and, given favourable conditions of wind and water, you may mostly depend on his rising to an after-cast if he misses you the first time. In fact, I have known a perch pursue the fly, and make several dashes at it and finally take it. With bait he always makes a bold dash, and I have more than once had to strip and swim for my rod, which I had laid on the bank beside me whilst using a lighter one for herrings. With the fly I have caught two at a cast, and might very likely have had a chance for three, had I used that number of flies.

"The perch may be taken all through the year, though, of course, the best months are the summer months, especially the latter part of the summer—March and April, to wit. The best wind is west (*vide* Dr. G——'s letter). They will hardly ever rise in a

southerly wind. The weight runs up to 6 lbs. or 7 lbs., though that is exceptional, the general weight being from 1 lb. to 4 lbs. I once read in a *Field* English newspaper an account of some fly-fishing in the Snowy River, in which the writer described very well a long fight with a perch, which, when landed, weighed 12¾ lbs. This is by far the largest perch I ever heard or read of—a *monstrum horrendum*. The writer also said he caught a 30 lb. cod fish with bait. This may be, but I cannot understand a cod fish being caught in an eastern river. The rule is, no cod (Murray cod) in the eastern rivers, and no eels in the western rivers. I have fished in the Murrumbidgee and Lachlan and some of their tributaries, and never caught, or heard of an eel being caught, in them or in the Murray, and this is the only instance I have heard of cod being caught in an eastern river. Some man who loved his country may have introduced them into the Snowy; his memory ought to be perpetuated.

"The herring, like the perch, despises gaudy flies, and, having good taste, prefers something quiet and unpretentious. The little grey-trout flies for bright waters suit them very well, and sometimes a white fly is a successful killer. I have seen as many as three caught at a cast on several occasions. I have taken in great numbers when a youngster, baiting with small grasshoppers, and have many times landed three at a shot. When throwing out, I have noticed several rise at each bait, and as many at the quill-float as it touched the water. I don't know what they weigh, and should not like to commit myself to any length. They are, however, smaller than the red herring.

"The mullet may be caught with dough, plain, or mixed with sundry compounds, such as are described

in "Stonehenge." I have heard of a good haul being made in the early morning, the place having been well ground-baited or burleyed the night before."

On the whole, I think I have said enough in these rather rambling notes to vindicate the character of our colony for piscatorial sport; and, now that renewed attention is being given to an organized and methodical acclimatization of trout, salmon, and other fishes, we bid fair at no far-distant date to place before the traveller attractions in the shape of good fishing that may tend to bring the gentle angling art more into fashion, and remove the reproach of having nought to offer but tenantless rivers.

So far as shooting is concerned, Australia offers a much wider choice, both of winged and furred game, than is popularly supposed. We cannot, indeed, compete as yet with India or Africa, or even the glorious heathery moors and hills of Auld Caledonia; but a very varied bag may be made by the enthusiastic sportsman out here, and the hospitality of the dwellers in the bush is proverbial.

I am sure many of my Anglo-Indian friends, who may meditate a retirement to Antipodean rest and ease, after a toilsome and not altogether profitless struggle with the pagoda-tree, will be agreeably surprised to hear of such a diversity of game, and such scope for the exercise of the killing mania, for which the dwellers in the east are famous.

"The best sport I ever had with the gun," writes one friend, "was on the Lachlan—not the river itself, but on its lagoons, its creeks and their lagoons, in the Forbes and Grenfell districts. The game was numerous and various. Ducks of many sorts; pigeons, both bronzewings and "squatters"—the latter so

called from its unwillingness to take to flight when disturbed, and its habit of squatting low on the ground or a limb of a tree when hiding from the foe —snipe, quail, landrail, water-hens, &c. Our bags used to be remarkably good, as will be shown by a few instances here given. On a large lagoon on the Boyd Creek, some miles from Forbes, we have bagged for three guns seventy-seven black ducks. The lagoon was of great extent, and by dispersing our forces we kept the ducks flying from one point to another, much in the same way as *jheel*-shooting in India. Our bag might have been much larger, had we not gone in for black ducks only, allowing all other sorts to pass free. On another occasion, for an afternoon's shooting, we bagged with three guns thirty-six ducks, mixed sorts, on a lagoon about four miles from Binda, on the Lachlan, called Gunnigal Trigger. This was formed by the damming back of a small creek, which thereupon overflowed into a little plain alongside, thus forming the lagoon, about a mile across each way. The timber round the edges afforded capital cover. On the Lachlan, at Merriganowrie, a party from Forbes and Grenfell, numbering four or five guns, bagged over 120 brace of bronzewing in two days. On the Bundaburra station plains, under Mount Tallabung, three guns in one day bagged over sixty brace of quail; and on the Bundaburra and Ooma, or Boyd, creeks, I have enjoyed remarkably good shooting. In fact, our bags used to be so uniformly good that we hardly ever troubled to keep records of them. On the Bogolong, Emu, and Garagaball Creeks, all running to the Bland, thence to the Lachlan, we used also to get grand sport. Most of these creeks have peculiar features. Where they run through the bush, their appearance is that of

ordinary bush-creek—steepish but low banks, narrow beds, with occasional water-holes of no great extent; but when they reach the plain country they alter very much. In some places they widen out into shallow but extensive swamps, full of grass and small rushes, affording grand snipe-shooting, and leaving, as the summer dries them up, a series of small water-holes, round the edges of which the snipe do congregate, though you may sometimes, on reaching one, flush, not snipe, but thousands of *budtharygars*, which rise in a great green cloud, with a mighty chorus of twittering. Further on you arrive suddenly at water-holes of more or less extent, some of them of splendid dimensions, extending for several miles, of good width, and in some instances as deep as twenty or twenty-five feet, surrounded by large river gums. Then suddenly the creek disappears, and nothing meets the eye but the level plain, the only indication of a flow of water having passed being the lie of the grass. After travelling some distance, you again drop suddenly on to a similar hole; and so on. These holes seemed to be merely depressions in the surface of the plains over which the creeks run. In them we occasionally shot some specimens of a beautiful crested grebe, and a large sort of savage-eyed darter. On one shallow lagoon on Bundaburra plains one of our party shot a white teal. The bird was carefully skinned, and the skin treated with arsenical soap, preparatory to stuffing, when a never-to-be-sufficiently-execrated cat stole and ate it. On the Bland plains, too, may be seen the brawlgongs, or native companions, waltzing round, dancing quadrilles, and otherwise cutting insane antics. There too may be seen quantities of the nardoo plant and seed, on which Burke and Wills

starved. The Australian bustard, or plain turkey, may be shot here. It is a very wary bird. The best way to approach them is on horseback or in a buggy. I have also had good shooting under the Widdn Mountains, of bush-ranging fame. At Wentworth Gully station, on the Bland side of the mountains, we used to get good snipe and duck shooting. Our usual mode of procedure on this and other stations where we were friendly was to drive down twenty or thirty miles, start next morning on horseback, ride several miles to a lagoon, jump off and wade in, and shoot as long as the ducks remained or were not too shy; then off to the next lagoon, and so on through the day; then back to our friend's hospitable habitation—a good supper, smoke, yarn, and bed. Next day ditto. As may be supposed, this sort of game was highly productive of rheumatism, from which our flasks and evening comforts could not save us. On the Wentworth Gully station was a series of very peculiar water-holes, running for some distance through the bush, and full of ducks. On one occasion I got seven ducks in one, and whilst chasing a wounded bird I almost ran into another water-hole, not twenty yards away, likewise full of ducks. This tameness on the part of the ducks did not last long, however, and after a few more shots all the bush was alive with quacking birds and whistling wings, flashing backwards and forwards in a manner very embarrassing to the tyro. These said holes are very peculiar, and seem almost as if they had been dug out. They are, I believe, begun in slight depressions, where water lies in wet weather, by the cray-fish, and are gradually tramped larger and deeper by cattle. They are called Gilgai holes. On one of our expeditions one of the party shot a duck,

which when dissected proved to have had a broken wing, which had re-set—not by the bone growing together in the usual way, but by a cross growth of bone, about the eighth of an inch long. It did not seem to affect the bird's flight in any way. I have also seen a duck shot, on whose wing nature had not been so successful, for from the last joint, where it had been broken, it was apparently withering away, and had not set. I suppose that in time the dead part would have dropped off."

Owing to the indiscriminate slaughter of hundreds of birds that were shot in the very wantonness of destruction, the spot has of late years much deteriorated. It was high time a close season was enforced by legal enactment though even now the Act is so faulty in construction, that it is questionable if it will serve the purpose that the framers had in view.

My friend Bob, speaking of the sport in the olden time, before the advent of Brummagem breechloaders, writes as follows:—

"In 1864-8, when I lived in Adelong, we used to make sporting parties to the Murrumbidgee, which was about sixteen miles away. Many of our fellows did not know or care much about sport, but enjoyed a holiday. Most of them being diggers, our crew was rather more jovial than was consistent with sport. Some of us certainly did shoot and fish during the day, but the principal part of the night was devoted to cards, songs, and the cheerful bowl. Those of us who were weary with the day's shooting would soon retire to a smaller tent than the general one, go to sleep in spite of our festive friends alongside, and be up in the morning, gun in hand and miles away, long before our mates had got through their first snooze. I soon

found it a mistake to remain in company when out on the lagoons; for the boys, whenever signs indicated the proximity of a lagoon, would start off at top speed for first shot, *whispering* to each other all the while to keep steady, and not make such a row. I used gradually to drop them, and 'gang my ain gate,' and nearly always returned with as heavy a bag as all the rest of them combined.

"Our Murrumbidgee expeditions were always undertaken in the summer, and I used, before starting out shooting, to sink a bottle of beer in a deep and shady hole of the river; and as my mates were all honourable men, I used, on my return in the evening hot and weary, to get a cool drink. A good plan for cooling your beer is to hang up the bottle (with the beer inside) in the wind, and wrap a wet cloth round it. A hot wind will cool it as effectually as a cool one. The last shooting I had was at Gloucester, in June, 1878. Mr. Merewether, his son, myself, and another, bagged 358 head of game, including 286 quail, and sixty-three ducks, the balance being made up with a tallegalla (brush turkey), and a few pigeons (wonga, and blue) and landrail. This was a fortnight's shooting. One of the party returned in a few weeks for a fortnight, and made a nearly similar bag; the cover was very heavy, and we must have lost at least thirty quail. The game there are preserved, the ground being private property, belonging to the A. A. Co. The shooting has in many parts of the country greatly deteriorated—partly owing to the increase in the population, partly to the cheapness of guns, and a good deal to the faulty construction of our late Game Act, which fixed one period for the whole country, regardless of conditions of climate and varieties of game. I

do not intend to discuss the thing, but may remark, that during open season I have, when shooting in the Lachlan district lagoons, seen many ducks' nests floating about, with from four to eight fresh eggs in them. These nests were circular rafts of wood, with a small hollow in the centre in which the eggs were deposited, and covered over with a thin layer of weed. I noticed that the eggs were always warm; I can't say whether this was owing to the bird having just left them, or whether the weed may not have generated some heat—some scientific searcher may find out; I was too busy taking life to spare time in inquiries as to how it was assisted into the world. I fancy, too, that the open season commencing on a general holiday had somewhat to do with the decrease in the game, in that lots of fellows, who never before dreamed of shooting, having the fact before them, that they could go shooting on the 1st, a holiday, and thinking it would be a good way of passing that holiday, marched forth on the war-path; and the unhappy birds being rendered tame, and careless of their greatest enemy, by several months' rest, fell easy victims to the multitudinous array of cockney sportsmen who then sallied forth a shooting. The destruction of cover has also a good deal to do with the disappearance of the game; places that I have seen swarming with quail, grass being nearly waist high, are now destitute alike of quail and grass, over-stocking being the cause of this; the clearing off of the scrubs and timber in the more settled districts may also have something to do with the disappearance of pigeons, &c.

"The Hexham swamps, near Newcastle, used to be grand shooting-grounds; but their day has gone by for ever, or at least so long as Newcastle remains a min-

ing town. All the miners have guns, and they shoot at everything, feathered or furred, from the tame pigeon to the smallest tomtit. Their vagaries are those of an uncivilized and brutish race; they steal what they can lift, and smash what they can't; one of their latest movements was to steal ("convey," the wise it call) most of the nuts from the bolts in the railway bridge over Ironbark Creek, to be used as sinkers for fishing; some of said nuts weigh half a pound. I have heard of 120 snipe, or 120 couple of snipe, being shot in Hexham swamps in a day, in the good old times! ancient snipe shooting! "Once upon a time" (proper way to commence a story) two sportsmen were shooting in Hexham swamps; No. 1 was very deaf, No. 2 was very large and fat; No. 1 had crossed a fence; No. 2 in climbing the fence gave a wheeze or grunt, whereupon No. 1 slewed round, and deposited a charge of No. 8 in that part of his fat friend's person called, I know not why, 'the seat of honour;' No. 2, howling with anguish, talked of instantly doing to No. 1 as he had been done by, and was with difficulty induced to see things in a proper light by No. 1's repeated assurance, 'Don't shoot, Johnny; for God's sake don't shoot. I thought it was a *snipe;* 'pon my soul I did!' He had, however, to assist his wounded friend home, who forthwith retired into the bosom of his family, to undergo the necessary operation of extraction, at the points of pen-knives, scissor-blades, needles, and sich. The game when much shot at develope great wisdom and cunning, perhaps the wisest of them being the wood-duck, which by the way is a goose. The sportsman may be pursuing a flock of them along a creek; he has marked them down at a favourite water-hole; he knows exactly the position they occupy, and what

cover he can get, and how best to utilize it. He marches along calculating the result of a double-barrel among them, and congratulating himself on the prospect of a heavy bag—when suddenly, while he is still a quarter or half a mile from them without following the windings of the creek, he will hear high overhead their peculiarly nasal cry, Quah-oo! and from the topmost limbs of one of the huge gum-trees which grow alongside the creek will fly, whilst still just out of range, a pair of sentries, who will fly down to the flock, and put them on the *qui-vive*. He may thus start three or four pair of sentries, which will be posted 100 or 200 yards apart, and which just before he gets within range will be off and away with their mocking laugh Quah-oo! When the sentries draw in, the flock will leave the water, and get out on the bank well away from cover; and as the out-generalled sportsman approaches, with his finger on the trigger, his heart full of bitterness, and his mouth full of maledictions, they will rise with an insulting chorus of Quah-oo! and seek fresh water-holes, and pastures new. But the wisest of our Australian birds is the crow, concerning whom it may not be amiss to give an anecdote or two. Many years ago I remember watching a pair of them circumventing an ancient and savage hen, which, proud I suppose of her fighting capabilities, had indiscreetly taken her chicks rather far from the refuge of the yard. The two crows sat in a peach-tree, silent and motionless, till they thought her far enough from safety, when suddenly one of them flew down, and deliberately placed himself in front of the hen. She instantly charged, head down and feathers staring; Mr. 'Wargan' calmly hopped back, still retaining hostile attitude, and making war-like demonstrations.

The old hen charged again. Again 'Wargan' retired; again the foolish mother charged, appearing quite proud of her victory, whilst he pursued his original tactics till she was lured a convenient distance from her brood, when Wargan No. 2, who had sat like a statue on his peach-tree perch, seemingly an indifferent spectator of the engagement, now pounced like a thunderbolt among the chicks, grabbed one, and with his mate flew off, leaving the old hen, like Lord Ullin, lamenting. I was so much struck with the sagacity displayed by the pair, that though I had the gun I did not shoot, but let them depart in peace. This was at Glendon, on the Hunter. Near Tumut I once watched a pair of crows adopting the same tactics with a sow and her suckers, the savoury morsel sought for in this instance being the tail of the sucking-pig, which crow No. 2 would get hold of, hang back on to, and twist savagely round, tugging with might and main. He did not get it at the first attempt, nor yet the second; and when the old sow hunted him away, he would always return to the same tail, and fasten on to the same sore place, whilst his victim, shrieking as only pigs, cats, and babies can shriek, hauled him round, till the old mother charged and hunted him; in the meantime, No. 1 crow would fasten on to another piggie; so that the poor old sow was kept dashing wildly from one marauder to the other, till her neck was exhausted, and her piggies tailless. It was too interesting a sight to interrupt; besides the piglings were bound to lose their tails sometime or other, and why not then, when they would feel the pain less, and were too young to appreciate the indignity.

"Another exceedingly interesting and plucky bird is the shrike or butcher-bird. They are not afraid of

any larger bird, but are always ready to attack them; and apparently for the mere love of slaughter, will often kill smaller birds. Their love for gore is a perfectly pure sentiment unadulterated by any sordid mixed motives. I have seen them sitting solemn and motionless on a garden tree, till some unfortunate wagtail or other small bird came round, when Mr. Butcher would be down on it like a shot, knock a hole through its foolish skull with his strong sharp bill, and leave it lying on the ground dead, and take no further notice of it. A friend once told me that a tenant of his lost a fine flock of geese, all killed by a black and white butcher-bird, a very handsome bird, and not nearly so large as a magpie. In each instance he killed his goose by driving a hole through its neck, just below the head.

"I have seen a sparrow hawk, when after the domestic pigeon, a bird very little smaller than himself, hunt the pigeon high into the air, where it would go on circling round and round, and getting higher and higher, till thoroughly exhausted, the hawk in the meantime returning to his tree, and calmly watching the terrified quarry, and as soon as the pigeon came down, tired and slow, he was after it like an arrow, and it only escaped by flying into the house. I am sorry to say that I shot that hawk; I did not then know the utter valuelessness of the pigeon, and what a domestic nuisance it is. The magpie, too, is a grand bird, a nugget of courage, and when breeding thinks nothing of pecking a hole into the head of a man, or the rump of his horse, should he come too near the nest."

I could spin out similar stories of all the winged denizens of our silent bush, but I fear I am already trespassing too much beyond my allotted space. So

far as shooting is concerned, it could undoubtedly be improved. The ignoble breed of potwallopers, in a democratic country like Australia, are of course in the ascendant. Still the Animals Protection Act of 1879 is a step in the right direction, and the new Acclimatization Society will do much to ensure the carrying out of the provisions of the Act, all crude and incomplete as they are, and will eventually, I have no doubt, make of Australia, or New South Wales at least, one of the finest countries for covert shooting in the world.

In the Appendix,[1] I give the Act entire, for the satisfaction of the curious. In clause 2, it will be noticed, the penalty for destroying game may easily be twisted into having reference only for the six months from August 1879 to February 1880. The phraseology is faulty to a degree, and the whole bill requires careful revision with a view to wider and more specific legislation on the subject. Nobody being particularly interested, and there being no government billets, or plunder from the public purse hanging to it, the Bill bears the usual faulty marks of colonial legislation, being slipshod, hasty, imperfectly considered, badly arranged, and likely to be perfunctorily administered.

[1] Appendix, Note D.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Climate of Australia—Sites for a sanatorium—Start for Mount Wilson—My host—The road-side publican—Types of colonial character—The parvenu—Vulgarity and boorishness—"Young Australia" in the bush—Domestic servants—Argument on the subject—The beauty of Mount Wilson—General description—Luxuriance of the vegetation—The tree-ferns and scrub—Sassafras and messmate—Wild fruits, mosses, and plants—Clearing—A Bush store—Cascade—Opinion on the climate by one of the leading Sydney physicians—Prospecting for a section—Forest scenery and denizens—Wild indigo—Plants that might be introduced—Casting about for water—Lunch in the bush—The awful silence—Forest leeches—Wynn's Rocks—Grandeur and sublimity of the desolation—A magnificent panorama—What a country for game!—The mountain land—Timber clearing—A Field for labour—False ideas of speedily acquiring riches—A bush interior—Prodigality—The kind of labour we want—How men can rise—Advice to the new-comer.

THE climate of Australia, it need hardly be said, is exceedingly varied. At Orange, for instance, or on the Blue Mountains, one may sit cowering over a fire, with snow mantling the ground outside, while down in Sydney the city lies sweltering under almost a torrid heat. The variations in the weather are exceedingly sudden, and consequently very trying to weakly invalids. Sydney, with its quick changes in temperature, is a bad place for consumptive or rheumatic patients. Toothaches and neuralgic affections are very common,

and dentistry, judging by the numbers of practitioners, seems to be a lucrative profession.

Away up on the table-lands of the interior, however, where there is an equable bracing atmosphere, the consumptive patient rallies rapidly, appetite and strength are restored and renewed, the hectic flush disappears, the hacking cough ceases, and the racking pain is quickly alleviated by the fine temperate bracing mountain air of Australia. It is a mistake for the consumptive patient to remain in Sydney. "Away, away, to the mountain's brow!" should be their cry.

The mountain air in Australia is a real miracle-worker; and when the apathy and sloth of Sydney capitalists shall awake to the fact that we have here one of the finest opportunities ever given to a country for attracting wealthy sufferers, perhaps in some sheltered snug retreat, amid the heathy dells and lovely gorges of Rydal or Wallerawang, or amid the tropical magnificence and surpassing beauty of Mount Wilson, we shall found a sanatorium that will attract visitors from all countries, and in time every hill and valley shall be studded with villas; while our hydropathic establishments and sanatoria shall equal, if they do not excel, the vaunted virtues of Malvern, Ben Rhydding, or any other of the famous summer resorts of tourists and patients in England, or even in Switzerland, Algeria, or Southern Italy.

One other great advantage we have over other resorts, is the marvellous cures said to be effected by the exhalations from our boundless eucalyptus forests. This is really, in the opinion of some of our best physicians, one of the chief causes of many of the wonderful curative effects of our air which have been chronicled. To Bournemouth, in England, for instance, patients are

often sent as the scent emitted from the fir-trees there have a salutary effect in some disorders.

I shall never forget my first trip to Mount Wilson. I shared the hospitality of one of our oldest and most respected colonists; one who had sprung from an English family of ancient lineage, whose name is honourably associated with the history of our settlement and administration of the great province of Scinde and our frontier policy in India, one of his brothers having been Commissioner of Scinde for many years. My host had himself been associated with many of the successive Governors of New South Wales, in high and confidential capacities, and his mind was a very treasure-house of racy recollections and rich memories of men, manners, and measures, reaching back even to the times when responsible government by Parliaments was unknown in the colony. He had erected a magnificent mansion, of solid freestone, on one of the loveliest sites on the mountain, and delighted to get away from the oppressive atmosphere and coaly surroundings of the grimy black country about Newcastle, to revel in the cool pure air and gorgeous scenery of Mount Wilson. On the mountain, a slight tendency to asthma which troubled him in the plains completely leaves him. This result is by no means singular.

The first part of the journey is by rail, which I have described in the account of my visit to Govett's Leap. Nowhere on any line of railway have I seen such magnificent wildness as is presented to the view of the traveller over the Blue Mountains line, except perhaps the Western Ghauts on the route from Jubbulpore to Bombay. Far away to the distant horizon on every side, spreads the still ocean of dull dead greenery.

There are no abrupt peaks or bold, rugged outlines, it is true; but deep gorges filled with an intense blue like the smoke of wood fires, and tumbled ridges, piled and jumbled together, all clothed with gnarled vegetation and studded with mighty boulders, recal to the imagination the descriptions of primeval chaos, ere yet the creative hand had brought order out of the pristine medley of piled material, from which the world was built. The country looks like a giant's workshop, like the playground of Titans and Genii. What a wilderness of desolation! Yet every gorge is rich in mineral treasures, and it wants but capital and man's intelligence to unlock the treasury, and transform the solitary barren wastes into busy haunts of active industry and teeming wealth.

At one station we are accosted by a burly, thick-set, coatless, unshaven old roadside publican, who has grown rich by the sale of liquors and successful land-jobbing; but who, with an affectation which is not exclusively colonial, professes to despise the conventionalities, and shows his independence by a profusion of strange oaths and a studied bluntness, which only provokes an amused smile from those who are in the secret. He excited my secret hilarity by a long disquisition on his own wealth and importance, his political influence in high quarters, and his ability to be or do anything if he had a mind to.

This is a very common type of the successful colonist. Such men are proud of their success, but they feel their own want of refinement. They are anxious to see their children provided with the refinements of life, and fitted to take a place in society, to which they themselves feel they can never attain; but they vent their dissatisfaction with themselves, by sneering at

everything polite, and affect to despise what they would give a good part of their wealth to possess themselves. Wealth has been acquired by ways and means that are better left uninvestigated. Grog and land-jobbing, successful mining speculations, cattle-dealing, money-lending, often no doubt downright hard plodding industry and honest thrift, but the "trail of the serpent" is still over all, and the speech of the shebeen, the stock-yard, and the bush-shanty, will often be ostentatiously obtruded, when, if the luckless tongue would but preserve a discreet silence, the possessor of the massive watch-chain and bejewelled fingers might pass muster, if not for a Chesterfield, at least for a respectable wealthy citizen. They cannot eschew the old domineering bounce, however; and, judging all men by their former experiences, and present comfortable balance at the bank, they are apt to apply merely a metallic test to all accomplishments. Many of these men, itching for notoriety, push their way into parliament, into municipal councils, sit at the board tables of public institutions, and one is puzzled whether to condemn most their offensive dogmatic purse-pride, their vulgar affectation of independence, or be amused at their egregious self-conceit. If they would only use their wealth more to forward schemes of public good, and exert what talents and influence they possess in helping forward projects that would tend to develope their country, and advance her national progress and prosperity, their blunt speech and manner might be forgiven. But most of them show no conception whatever of patriotism, and their public spirit is concentred in narrow cupidity and selfishness almost superhuman. They are very fond of getting their names paraded in print on every conceivable occasion,

yet they would feel contaminated by the presence of a newspaper reporter at the same tables. As a Yankee friend remarked to me on seeing a few specimens of the reigning tribe in Newcastle, "This town 'll never go ahead, I guess, till you have a few dozen respectable funerals."

They are continually "blowing" about their wealth, but if you want a subscription for an hospital, a church, a school of arts, or any similar institution, or if you want to get up a fresh food company, a water-supply, an experimental farm, a town clock, or village drinking-fountain, their pockets are hermetically sealed, and they will expend a great deal of vigorous profanity in the attempt to show that all these and similar public movements should be got up, paid for, and maintained by government.

In sober truth, the honest critic must perforce be chary in pronouncing a favourable verdict on colonial manners. This assumption of bluff independence borders closely on the offensive. You rarely hear any one addressed as Mr., by the common run of colonial cousins. Even their public men are dubbed "Bob this," or "Charley that," and the late Premier is always very irreverently addressed as "Old Jack." Respect for age or parental authority is not so deep or so general as at home. On a country road, if you pass the compliments of the day to any young bush hand you meet, ten to one but you are answered with some offensive impertinence, or at best a loutish stare of uncourteous surprise. Boys and lads in the country are slouching in dress and gait, awkward and clumsy in a room, uncouth in conversation, and where at all at their ease, they are rude and boisterous in their mirth.

The best place to see a young colonial bumpkin is in the saddle. He sits like a centaur and is in every respect an accomplished horseman. He is suspicious of new acquaintances. Yet withal he is good grit at bottom, and only wants education, travel, and more frequent contact with outside influences and intelligent minds to make a fine man. At present the average colonial country youth, although he fancies himself a very smart fellow indeed, is cramped and rustic, both in thought, speech, and behaviour. In the bush, where he is undisputed "cock of the walk," he is apt to look with undisguised contempt on everything cultured and refined as womanish and feeble. Let us hope he will improve as time rolls on.

Parents in many respects are much to blame. They hear their hopeful young progeny speak disrespectfully of their superiors in station, forwardly criticize and impertinently contradict their elders, and pass malicious, unkind and sneering comments on their neighbours and their neighbours' doings, and never deem it their duty to correct such precocious insolence and forwardness. Nay, in nine cases out of ten, young Hopeful is considered a prodigy of smartness, and is encouraged by the cynical encouragement of his democratic sire and sun-hardened money-saving mother.

Domestic servants are a terrible trouble to the young housewife. Indeed the lamentations over this affliction are universal. I could fill volumes with instances of insolence, insubordination, malicious carelessness, and stupidity; all of course from the mistress's point of view.

Yet I should like to put in a word on the other side for the universally execrated maid-servants. In all my observations of Australian home-life I am irresis-

tibly forced to this conclusion, that the belief in money being omnipotent is all prevalent. In the relations between master and servant there seems to be incessantly put forward the idea, that everything is to be reduced to a money test. The hire, wage, or pay is brought into undue prominence. The servant thinks, if she earns her pay, that is all *she* has to study. The employer fancies that if he or she pays the servant the stipulated wage, then she or he has only to see that the worth of the money is rendered in return. Need I say that this is a totally false view to take of all service, and especially of domestic service. I firmly believe this lies at the root of the whole difficulty, this habit of regarding the relationship between mistress and maid as a mere mercenary compact. The importation of a living, mutual kindliness and sympathy, into the connexion, is deprecated on both sides; the servant is looked on merely as a hired assistant, or worker, the master or mistress as a convenient milch cow, and the element of mutual interdependence is scouted by both parties. The servant in my estimation should be made to feel that she *is* one of the family; that the service is not alone mercenary, but is domestic in character as well as in name. So far then I believe nearly as much blame lies at the door of the mistress as of the servant.

Mistresses come less into contact with their servants than formerly; are less in the kitchen; give less actual manual aid with their own hands than the housewives of old. This is, again, perhaps, a direct result of democratic institutions. Absolute equality of political rights infallibly produces a feeling of social equality, and in cases, too, where many wealthy mistresses do not belong to old, wealthy, or aris-

tocratic families, servants are apt to reflect that not very long ago the mistress rose, perhaps, from a lower social stratum than she now occupies, and respect and deference are on that account somewhat weakened. On the other hand, the reports of immigration agents disclose the fact that, out of the hundreds of domestic servants imported into this colony, but very few represent the best of their class. The difficulty of getting good servants in England is now one of the most serious drawbacks to life there. It is, therefore, highly improbable that we get the best material here. The percentage of what are called "objectionable characters" is frequently very high, and it is to be feared the experiences of the emigrant ship are not of an elevating character. With increased education and increased intelligence, too, on the part of servants, their sensitiveness has not unnaturally kept pace in a corresponding degree. They are better fed, clothed, housed, and paid than of yore, for the general increase of luxury in living has affected even the kitchen and servants' hall. In many cases, like Jeshurun, they have waxed fat and kicked, and a corresponding degree of resentment is generated in the minds of the mistresses.

The fact of the demand being greater than the supply naturally makes the girls feel independent, as they know they need never want a situation.

The good old-fashioned plan of having servants in at least once a day to unite with the family in worship and prayer is sneered at as vulgar, behind the times, ridiculous, subversive of discipline, and goodness knows what else. In many cases it is doubtless due to the preponderance of Roman Catholic domestics in Protestant households. Yet, where both are of the same

faith, surely a common creed should be an additional argument in favour of this good old family custom. What was implied in the fine old custom was this:—it was an acknowledgment that mistress and maid, master and man, were of one blood and of equal value before the Almighty Maker; that their interests were in common; and as they mingled their prayers together, it begat a feeling of mutual sympathy. There was a feeling of community, and though some may scout the idea as sentimental, it will be found that after all sentiment is a much more important factor in the affairs of daily household life than most people imagine.

Meantime, during this long digression, we have lost sight of our fern-clad retreat, the peerless Mount Wilson.

The beauty of the mountain bursts upon one with all the suddenness of a change of theatrical scene. We have to drive nearly nine miles from the solitary road-side station where the train drops us, and the road, the whole distance, runs through an intensely arid, barren, uninteresting country. The soil seems barely sufficient to support the hardy, heathy-looking plants, all of whom in the season bear beautiful but scentless flowers. The formation here is all of the prevailing sandstone, but nearing the mountain we dash through a tiny rivulet, and lo! we are at once in fairyland. The mountain is an outcrop of volcanic trap formation. It bursts clear through the sandstone, and must have been an overflow in some far back geologic age, of the fiery pent-up mass of molten fluid surging deep in the bowels of the earth. It reminded me, for all the world, of a gigantic conical wedding-cake. Corresponding to the sugar and almond

paste is a rich, loamy, chocolate-coloured soil, which encrusts the mountain over all its extent to a depth varying from eighty inches to eighty feet.

In this rich soil vegetation on the most varied and luxuriant scale finds a congenial nursery. It is but a step from the arid, heath-covered, rocky slopes, on which gnarled and stunted white gums struggle for existence, into a very wilderness of luxuriant, tropical vegetation. I have never in all my wanderings seen such a sudden change in natural scenery. It is as if one stepped from a bare, bleak, gravelly yard into the most magnificently-furnished fernery or greenhouse. The air is loaded with the dank, humid odour of a forcing-house, and on every side the beauties of the vegetable world are scattered with a lavish profusion that the finest artificial herbarium could never equal. The tree-ferns at once arrest the eye. What words can picture their matchless grace and beauty! What countless multitudes raise their feathery fronds and display their loveliness on every side! Tall sassafras and messmate-trees tower straight up like a forest of masts, and their glossy green curling leaves are inexpressibly grateful to the eye, wearied and sated with the eternal dull dead drapery of the rugged mountain gums.

The sassafras is a noble-looking tree. It bears a white blossom in the spring, and the wood, when cut, emits an agreeable scent. The messmate seems to be a kind of stringy bark. The wood is hard and durable, and yields a valuable timber. Never, even in the Indian jungles, have I seen more luxuriant vegetation. From every chink in the soil spring forth ferns and trailing mosses. Many of the tree-ferns are ten, fifteen, twenty feet high. How beautifully their delicate green

and feathery tracery contrast with the glossy dark green mass of foliage that drapes the sassafras scrub. The lawyer vine festoons every tree, and I can at once detect various plants that bear undoubted testimony to the wonderful richness and fecundity of the soil. I noted several varieties of the *Solanacea*, wild blackberries, raspberries, wild tobacco—a tall broad-leafed shrub with a leaf not unlike the oleander, but the branches crowded with berries of all tints, from shining green, olive, yellow, crimson, scarlet, down to cherry black. Mosses carpet the jutting rocks, and silvery tufts drape the trunks of the trees. The Blue Mountain parrots dart in and out, and round about among the trees, flashing past like animated fireworks. Indeed, the scene as it bursts upon the gaze is very lovely, and the most eloquent tongue would be beggared to find words adequately to describe the exuberant wealth of beauty which is here spread before us.

On the brow of the hill we come on to a clearing of some ten acres belonging to my friend, on which has been erected a neat weatherboard cottage. All the tall timber has been cut down, but the tree-ferns have been left. Can you imagine ten acres of magnificent tree-ferns? Nothing else to be seen!—they are as plentiful as cabbages in a garden bed. The sight was to me as rare as it was surpassingly beautiful. On the opposite side of the road, beside a rudely-fenced paddock, and overlooking the bleak tumbled wilderness of distant arid hills, stands a rough log cabin of a primitive bush style. This is inhabited by a decent old Irishwoman, who keeps a store for the accommodation of the parties of bushmen, sawyers, rail-splitters, and road-makers that are at work on the various properties on the mountain.

Several large clearings have been already made. My friend has a magnificent mansion of hewn stone, with every convenience of a first-class modern gentleman's seat, erected on one of the most lovely sites in the place. The cost of the house was over 5000*l.* Other nice houses, though chiefly of wood, are being put up on various parts of the mountain. An accurate survey has been made, roads mapped out, and this beauteous retreat promises by-and-by to become a favourite summer resort for the *élite* of Sydney. In the most centrally situated part of the surveyed land there is a beautifully clear running stream of water, as cold as ice. It rises in an outcrop of the original sandstone, which seems somehow to have been embraced in the invading overflow of trapstone, and after a merry, bubbling, purling journey of some few furlongs through the ferns and mosses, it suddenly plunges sheer down a giddy leap of some eighty or one hundred feet. With a larger volume of water, this would form a magnificent cascade. As it is, once one has forced his way through the almost impenetrable undergrowth, the scene amply repays him for his trouble. The brawling little brooklet tumbles headlong down, scattering its showers of broken spray from shelf to shelf of the mossy, water-worn rocks, until it is dissipated in mist far below. Dewy globules glisten on every leaf. The foliage is exquisite in its freshness and vivid greenness. A monster tree-fern stands still and motionless, like a sentinel, in the hazy gloom beneath; and the rugged, precipitous sides of the cleft abyss are literally loaded with all the rarest forms of fern-life, and the most beautiful mosses, orchids, heaths, and living greenery of all kinds.

What a site for a sanatorium, for a hydropathic

establishment, or for a Trossach's Hotel! In the free, fresh air here the lungs expand, the relaxed frame acquires fresh vigour, and the breath of the asthmatic patient comes freely and easily, after the heavy, moist atmosphere of the plains.

Writing to me on this subject, one of the leading physicians of Sydney says: "The atmosphere of Sydney and the eastern seaboard generally, for the greater part of the year, is warm and moist; but as you travel westward, and pass the coast-range, the air becomes dry and rarefied on the table-land, which lies between two and three thousand feet above the sea-level. Prolonged residence on the coast-line has a relaxing and enervating effect upon the system. The blood becomes thin, and hence the inhabitants are predisposed to the varied forms of neuralgic and nervous dyspepsia. Patients troubled in this way derive immense benefit by removal to the dry, light, and pure air of the mountains or table-land.

"New South Wales has long been known as a health-resort for consumptive invalids; but it is not on the seaboard that they derive benefit, but on the elevated plateaus to the west and south-west, in and near the Bathurst, Orange, and Goulburn districts. It is a matter of constant observation, that those coming here with consumptive disease, or in whom the disease has here originated, only get worse until their removal to the inland air. In the first stage of the disease, if the patient seek such change, adopt a country out-door life on a 'station,' or such-like restoration to perfect health often ensues. Many hundreds of lives have been saved in this way. Indeed, it is quite a common thing to meet with people who tell you, 'I came out here on account of weakness of the lungs; I

spat blood at home. I went up into the bush, and have now been in perfect health for years.'

"On the other hand, I have seen scores of patients who, having arrived in Sydney well advanced in the second stage of the disease, have become rapidly worse in the moist and warm atmosphere which prevails near the coast. The practical deduction from these facts is, that physicians in Europe should advise their patients to come here in the first stage of the disease, and not wait until the second, or softening, stage has commenced; and, further, that the towns on the coast of New South Wales should be avoided, and the sufferers should pass at any rate nine months of the year on the elevated table-land, and, if possible, adopt a bush life.

"There is another class of patients whose sufferings are remarkably alleviated, and often entirely removed, by residence in an inland district. I refer to asthmatical patients. It is well known to all physicians in Sydney that this affection is frequently entirely absent, as long as the individual remains at an elevation of two or three thousand feet, and at a distance of 100 or 150 miles from the coast-line. Many a time has a patient left Sydney terminus suffering acutely from the dreadful cough and oppression of breathing which characterizes this disease, and on reaching the summits of the Blue Mountain range the trouble has vanished.

"Children, too, suffering from mesenteric disease have often been restored to health, mainly by removal to the mountain air, or that of the elevated plains."

The above opinion is amply endorsed by most of the Sydney medical men of my acquaintance. A convalescent home, say at Mount Wilson or Wal-

lerawang, would doubtless attract crowds of inmates. There is a fortune in the idea, if capital and enterprise would but embark in the work.

My friend having purchased several sections on a spur running from the other side of the mountain, we set off early one day to try and discover the locality. We soon left the clearings, and plunged into the tangled bush. The only guide we had was the infrequent blazings on the trees, made by the surveyor's party who had mapped out the ground. The woodland scenery was magnificent. On every hand rose the primeval giants of the forest, and the varieties of ferns were legion. Huge prostrate trunks of trees lay rotting in the hollows, and mixed inextricably in a bewildering maze. We toiled and clambered and ploughed our way among bushes and creepers and ferns reaching waist-high. Occasionally we disturbed a snake, or flushed a flock of parrots or beach cockatoos. Once we witnessed the antics of a male lyre-bird, ruffling his plumes and strutting proudly round, drum-major fashion, to the delectation of two hens, who watched him from the altitude of a creeper-festooned *eucalyptus*. Thorny pliant vines and thick undergrowth started up at every step to impede our path, and over all the bush thick serried rows of withered stocks of indigo made our progress laborious in the extreme. The indigo here grows in most marvellous profusion. I firmly believe an indigo factory might be here profitably started. I fancy coffee might be grown, and vanilla, cardamoms, and other valuable plants might be introduced. After three hours' incessant labour and severe exertion, we found by our plot-map and compass that we had advanced barely over a mile. As the point of our quest was yet two

miles distant, we owned ourselves beaten, and, as the copious perspiration had made us thirsty, we cast about for signs of water.

My comrade was an experienced old bushman, and, guided by indications which smacked somewhat of mystery to me, he led straight down a precipitous gully, bordered by beetling crags on either hand, and densely shaded by the most tangle-matted undergrowth I have ever seen, and we soon came to a mossy wall of rock, from every crevice of which tiny pearl-drops of icy cold water trickled incessantly. Selecting the rib of a tree-fern, he trimmed it, sharpened one end, and inserted it into a crack in the rock. It acted as a funnel, and from its outer projecting end we soon had a tiny trickling rill of clear, deliciously cool water. Here we sat and munched our mid-day meal. An awful stillness reigned around. Far down the ravine seemed to lose itself in utter gloom and blackness. There was no twitter of bird nor hum of insect. Even the mosquitoes were silent. The advent of man was too unwonted an event and luxury for them to lose time over a musical prelude, and they attacked us with silent but indomitable ardour. The soothing smoke of tobacco failed to put them to flight, and we were fairly forced to beat a retreat. It was evening ere we got home. The forest-leech is here met with. They reminded me of their Nepaul congeners. From every leaf in some of the moist hollows they stretched their long, slender, swaying, thread-like bodies. If there was ever a chink in all your habiliments, they were sure to find it, and the traveller has often to pick their bloated unsightly carcases from legs and neck, and even from his armpits, when he reaches home.

If any one doubts the fertility of the Australian soil,

and the luxuriance of bush vegetation, let him visit Mount Wilson. If he be a drawing-room knight, and not accustomed to plunge through thorny brakes and tangled wildernesses, let him accept my description and rest satisfied. Tearing and plunging through such bush as that on Mount Wilson is a very muscular exercise.

Another day we went to a bald, rocky promontory, overlooking one of the most majestic scenes of wild desolate grandeur I have ever looked upon in all my wanderings. The locality is known as Wynn's rocks. A good road has been cut through the forest, and ladies can be driven to within a short distance of the jutting cliffs. As we paced along the sylvan track, numerous lyre-birds and the gorgeous Blue Mountain parrots flitted noiselessly or ran rapidly across the path. The mountain is the seat of surprises. Through a dense belt of tangled forest-scrub we emerge on to a huge tabular rock, and the full awfulness of the scene bursts at once on the view. It realizes to the life the very ideal of savage and chaotic desolation. Sheer down from your feet, you look into a yawning valley hundreds of feet below you. The trees look like tiny shrubs. The sun sends back no cheerful rays from the piled-up rocky cairns, but the rugged walls impress one with the feeling of profound loneliness and inaccessibility. Immense yawning chasms gape up at you, their every cranny clad thickly with dwarfed gnarled trees, fit only for firewood. On all hands you see the traces of the devastating bush-fires. No hoof or horn is to be seen. Deep down in the bottoms, where concealed waters noiselessly steal along, and whose rugged barrenness is softened by the intense blue haze of the wonderfully-coloured atmosphere, there

are occasional patches of greener verdure, where the succulent valley-grass and the lovely tree-ferns feel the influence of the trickling mountain spring. Great buttresses of seamed, scarred, rugged rock frown above the valleys. Their outlines assume fantastic shapes, and seem like a phalanx of Gorgons.

Casting our eyes across the intervening, chasm-like valley, we see in the far distance, like a spider's thread, the track leading from the railway station, and for the moment we experience a sense of relief to see the white shining hotel and buildings of Mount Victoria, speaking of life and settled habitation. To the left we see Bell's line of road, winding like a serpent's track along the face of the crags, and in and out among the hills. This line was shown to Bell, an exploring surveyor, by a black *gin*, and it forms a droving road through the mountains, debouching somewhere near Lake Macquarie.

On the flanks of the hills, which are inexpressibly barren-looking and desolate, occasional green patches show out at intervals, agreeably relieving the dull dead monotone of colour. The air is surpassingly clear, and so exhilarating and pure that the lungs expand, and the spirits become buoyant, as if under the influence of nitrous oxide.

On the left, a little farther round, a hill called from its form the Haystack, proudly rears its head. Beyond it Mount Thamar rises, surmounted by a fringe of dreamy-looking withered trees, done to death by the murderous custom of ring barking. These withered sentinels give to the bold summit of the mountain a still deeper aspect of desolate wildness. The mountain country lies spread out before us like a panorama. There stands Mount St. George in front—an isolated

rounded mass, the sandstone strata ringing it round with circling belts of inaccessible precipices. Far beyond, where earth and sky melt into a blue, blurred, wavy outline, the eternal ocean spreads out towards the verge of infinity. In the deep valley below, straight as a plummet down, the moaning wind sways the gum-tree tops, and a sighing, wailing sound seems to rise from the desolate valley, as if the genius of solitude were crooning the death keene over the grave of buried joys and stifled hopes. I held my breath and felt inclined *to greet.*

In one deep, gloomy defile to the right, where the soil was volcanic, the contrast in the foliage from that of the sandstone foundation was most marked. The trees were clad in a deep, vivid, intense green, showing the difference between the neutral-tinted sombre gums and the dark glossy verdure of the mimosas, wattles, messmates, and other similar trees that delight in shade and moisture. But now the lengthening shadows come creeping slowly down the valleys. We aroused from our contemplative mood and retraced our steps.

There are numerous clearing parties on the hill. The clearing is let out by contract. Twenty-seven pounds an acre is about the average cost. Sometimes it goes as high as thirty-seven, and even forty pounds. The contractor gets what he can make out of the timber. We have sawyers, rail-splitters, draymen, quarrymen, and various artisans, all at work here on plentiful wages. There is ample room here for steady, willing men, and this locality is but the counterpart of countless others in the colony.

Yet something is wrong, or we should not hear so much of men being deluded out under false promises

and fraudulent representations. The fact is, that young fellows form too exalted an estimate of what lies before them. They think wealth is to be acquired swiftly and without effort. Here as elsewhere they need to practise persistent effort. Frugality and thrift allied to industry will infallibly produce money here. Let us look into this timber-cutter's hut. It is rude and dirty, and discomfort is on every side suggested. But this is not all. Everywhere are the evidences of lavish prodigality. Flour sacks lumber the shelves. Sardine boxes, jam tins by the score, pickles, butter, ay, even candied fruits and fig boxes, are in the shanty-man's stores. Chunks of tobacco are here, of course, and an assortment of pipes. Gaudy Crimean shirts, bacon, cheese, and, most mournfully suggestive of all, rum and gin bottles, show that work is plentiful and wages high. I maintain without fear of contradiction, that, compared with the average style of life of an English peasant or Scotch labourer, the bushman in Australia fares like Dives, "sumptuously every day." He has always a cheque to cash when he reaches the towns. Does the publican or the savings' bank see most of the colour of his money? This is the question to which the answer reveals much that is ominous, when we begin to speculate on the future of our race here.

Apart from want of frugality and thrift, we get out scores of the wrong class of emigrants. We do not want men who will loaf about the towns. We want unskilled labour; men to hew wood and draw water, who will be content to wait a little and accumulate their savings. After five years of contract work in the bush or in the interior—and, mark this, such work is always procurable at highly remunerative prices—if

men will exercise self-denial, the labourer may become master of his own holding, and found a home such as the labour of a lifetime would never acquire in England. If all the money goes in periodical sprees and in lavish expenditure on luxuries, of course the man will *never* rise; but it is not the government or the colony that he need rail against.

Many of our best and most successful bushmen, who gradually win their way to comfortable home life and independent settlement, are thrifty, prudent, plodding Germans. Scotchmen, too, stand out very favourably. But any man, if he be industrious, plodding, frugal, after some years—not by bounds, not all at once, but by honest, painstaking diligence—may "see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." It is only "the hand of the diligent that maketh rich" in New South Wales as elsewhere.

To the new comer who is willing to work I would say, shun the towns. Take the first billet that offers. Put what little money you may have into the savings' bank. By the first year you will have acquired enough of what is called colonial experience to be able to find the best market for your labour. You can save half your wages every year if you are careful, and by the end of five years you may be in a position to clear for yourself on your own selection, and found a homestead of your own. You won't do it by having an annual "flare-up" at the nearest bush public, or by running into debt to solace yourself with jams, preserved fruits, and pickles.

Had we, too, a better land system, the task of settlement might be even much easier than it is, and the right stamp of men would be attracted to our shores. Corrupt government and a vile land system are the dry

rot of Australia; and ere I close my book I must devote a chapter or two to a consideration of the quality of our legislators, and the results of their wisdom.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The functions of Government—Estimate of Colonial Parliaments—Rallying-cries—Many of our legislators unfit for their position—At war with "Society"—Parliament degraded into a court of petty causes—Sir Henry Parkes on the subject—Extract from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*—Municipal councils—Difficulty of finding good men—Constituencies to blame—The qualities they appreciate in their representatives—Beggarly dependence on the State—Good men disinclined to enter public life—Necessity for a Cobden Club—An overgrown Civil Service—Selfishness and apathy in high places—My opinions corroborated by a well-known writer—"Capricornus" on Australian statesmanship—Deterioration of the Civil Service—The same writer on this subject—Jealousy of outside criticism—Deep-seated diseases require strong remedies.

In many parts of the world at the present day, and notably in our colonies, representative institutions have been undergoing a severe ordeal. America has lately passed through a crisis that threatened at one time to end in social revolution and anarchy. The scenes during late years in the French Chamber, in the German and Austrian Parliaments, and the Italian House of Representatives, have shown that there is a fierce seething mass of conflicting political opinions existing on most social questions, used as weapons of attack in the furtherance of purely political aims. In the English House of Commons even scenes of disgraceful personal attack and ebullitions of temper have

of late years been freely indulged in, and have tarnished the reputation of an Assembly that has been held up to the admiration of the world as one of the most orderly and dignified bodies of legislators in it. In Tasmania, New Zealand, Victoria, Queensland, and, alas! most notably in Sydney, Parliament has almost become a word synonymous with all that is unseemly and contemptible. Unless some improvement be initiated, and our colonial legislators learn the rudiments of self-respect, while realizing even in some faint measure the dignity of their position, they promise to bring the whole system of parliamentary institutions into merited odium.

The real functions of government are not fully known or properly apprehended by one half the members that are returned to parliament. It has degenerated into a body of mere delegates, who seem to think that the supplying petty local wants and requirements, the investigation of purely personal matters between individuals, is to be the end and aim of their parliamentary duties. Broad statesmanlike views bearing on national weal seem to be treated in so narrow and circumscribed a manner, and from so restricted a point of view, as has reduced their treatment to that of the level of municipal questions on local detail. Such questions as railway extension, the land laws, legal reform, education, sanitary reform, the laws relating to bankruptcy, immigration, fiscal reform, electoral reform, banking laws, national defence, federation, have been looked at, not with the comprehensive grasp of statesmanship, but in the narrow spirit of class prejudice. The first question is not, "How will this affect the country at large? What effect will it have on the welfare of the nation? How will it affect the

interests of posterity?" But, "How will this affect *my* district? Will it please *my* particular constituency? And what political capital can *I, personally,* make out of this?" Let the observant critic look, for example, at the rallying cries during a contested election in New South Wales. To what do they point? What gets most prominence? In nearly every case the satisfaction of merely local requirements. Every candidate, with a few hopeful exceptions, declares that their first aim on entering public life will be to get as large a share of the contents of the public purse as they possibly can for their own particular electorate. Political support is, as a rule, given to the men who are most lavish of promises to beg and bully and filch from the public purse. It is not, therefore, the independent man of far-seeing intelligence who is selected. He is too honest to pander by promises of this sort. He maintains that purely local enterprises had better be started and kept going by that grandest motor of all, self-help. He disdains to nurture this beggarly spirit, which is only too painfully evident all over the colony in every electorate. Too many of our free and independent electors, however, seem to think that their parliament is simply an institution for the reception of individual complaints, a redressor of personal wrongs, a channel for the ventilation of personal wants and requirements; and it is daily called on to perform duties which it is the bounden duty of individuals to perform for themselves.

Lest it might be imagined that I am dealing in vague generalities, let me make an extract from the speech of Sir Henry Parkes, the present premier, which forcibly draws attention to this very point. Speaking to a body of his constituents in 1877, the

veteran politician said: "We have arrived at a time, in working out our institutions, when every patriotic man must be careful how he steers his course. From one cause and another an amount of confusion has arisen, which obscures the public mind, and instead of the electoral body as a whole fixing their gaze upon great national objects and suffering themselves to be guided by broad, well-defined principles, unhappily for the time constituencies are seeking to gratify their small and petty local wants, instead of assisting the progress of this great country. The time has come, whether for good or evil, when your representatives ought to present a stern front to the attempts to plunder the public treasury. Unfortunately for this country we have had for some years past a surplus revenue, derived from the improvident sale of the public lands. It seems to me that going east or west, going north or south, or into the far western interior, we find men, and bodies of men, who, instead of studying the principles which ought to be at the foundation of national progress, are seeking how much they can gain from that surplus revenue of the country. Unless this vice, this political vice of the constituents, is eradicated, depend upon it it will produce a state of rottenness in this country which will be fatal to the real welfare of all classes of the community."

So recently as July 30th, 1879, I find the following in a leader in the *Daily Telegraph*, a vigorous new daily newspaper that has just been established by Victorian enterprise in the New South Wales metropolis. Speaking of the resignation of one of our members, because he found himself powerless to stem the tide of jobbery and corruption, the writer says,—

"Mr. Sutton's motives for resigning have been some-

what severely criticized, but most public men will have some sympathy with them. There is no doubt that the position of representative has very much degenerated from the high ideal which enthusiastic politicians have formed of it. A member of a legislative body should be influenced only by a desire to serve the best interests of the community, without respect to persons or localities. His own friends and his own constituency might, no doubt, claim his immediate attention, but only so far as is consistent with the public interests. No doubt each honourable member does his best to act on this principle, but we all know how signal and general is the failure. The representation of the people in the legislature has degenerated into a scramble for the loaves and fishes. The petty spirit of localism has dragged down the noble office of representative to a sort of huckstering commission agency, and the patriotic desire to benefit the country at large has been replaced by the sordid policy of securing favours for one's own constituency and friends. Of course, there are many honourable exceptions, but it must be admitted that the tendency of public life is in this direction. A member's constituency and his constituents may be honourably served, and well served, too; but constituents are exacting, and often unreasonable. The expenditure of public money in their district, and the finding of situations for a goodly number of its residents, are too often regarded as far better recommendations than ability, a knowledge of public affairs, and high principles. Thus it is that the most successful candidates for seats in legislative assemblies now are chiefly local men, bold and energetic, not overburdened with modesty or scruples, and possessing a certain

amount of rough-and-ready talking capacity, too often degenerating into mere fluent reiteration of the boldest commonplaces."

It is much the same in the municipal councils. Private interests utterly swamp public spirit, and patriotism simply means plunder. Every alderman tries first to get roads made "agin his own door," with such persevering and barefaced persistency, that the phrase has passed into a proverb. Of course there are exceptions. There are many honourable, intelligent, patriotic and public-spirited men, who take a prominent part in colonial politics. Would there were more of them.

I freely grant that in a limited community, suitable persons are hard to find. Men of culture, possessed of sufficient leisure, are not always forthcoming to contest a colonial election. Indeed it is often a thankless task to accept the rôle of representative, and have to try to please the fickle crowd. As time progresses, too, and bickerings and personalities get year by year more prevalent, it requires no ordinary sense of public duty, to tempt a refined man forth from his retirement, to face the slanders, the imputation of unworthy motives, and the vulgar abuse, which are the weapons most dear to a certain set of political jobbers, whom the apathy of the electors, and their own audacity, have invested with the honourable, but often dishonoured letters M.L.A.

Much of the blame of our low political morality lies at the door of the constituencies themselves. Manhood suffrage is no doubt theoretically a fine thing. But manhood suffrage without education, intelligence, or uprightness, is an unmitigated curse to any country. Sir Henry Parkes recognized this, when he introduced

his measure on education, and established the present public school system, the association of which with his name is his best claim to a lasting reputation as a statesman. Education has yet, however, much to do, before the mass of the electors in New South Wales arrive at the ideal standard of excellence, or even a bare approximation to it. Not that I mean to say the colonial people are worse educated than the proletariate at home. Far from it, but many of the electors are men who have never been out of the country or travelled far inside it. Many in the interior have never even seen the ocean. Many have no views on political science at all. They have not studied the workings of politics in other lands. They cannot see an inch beyond the pressing local want of the moment. They are like children, enamoured of the big drum in the orchestra, and have an infantile belief in loud protestations. They are as gullible as an ostrich, and the man who can talk loudest, make the boldest protestations, and promise most, is the man for their money. If he can outswear a bullock-driver, and out-drink a distiller's drayman, he is almost certain of a seat in parliament.

The would-be aspirant for colonial parliamentary honours, must be ready to suffer a good many indignities in a canvass, if he would be successful. When on the hustings, his "billet," to use a colonial expression, is worse than a dog's. Once fairly seated, he is bullied and pestered and worried, to obtain billets for a hungry crowd of office-seekers, who with "their sisters and their cousins and their aunts," all look to him to find them subsistence from the public purse, that they may shirk honest work, and live at the expense of the state. This willingness to depend on

the state is seen in every grade, and in every shade of social life. Is a ferry boat wanted? A church, a culvert, a foot bridge, a town clock, a reading-room or a gas-lamp? "Petition the member!" Apply to government! They have plenty of money. If we don't get it, some more unscrupulous and persistent constituency will get it. Such is the style of reasoning, and members in too many instances pander to it.

I believe it to be a simple fact, that our capable men are year by year becoming more and more disinclined to enter public life. They meet with little courtesy from those who should support them. Inside the house, the fair rules of debate are continually transgressed. Vile imputations and scurrilous abuse are hurled about recklessly and indiscriminately. The patriotic, high-minded man who might do good service to the state, and shed a lustre on the legislation of his country, shakes his head at mention of the word parliament, and declares the game not to be worth the candle. The hard-headed man of business follows suit, and says, it is not good enough.

The great hope of the country lies in a more widely extended system of liberal education, and the multiplication of public schools. The throwing off of apathy by the better-minded and more enlightened citizens. Better organization of the intelligent classes, and a bolder, more manly, and more vigorous protest, against corruption by the press.

Among minor remediary measures, I believe the foundation of a liberal club, such as the Cobden club, might do much. Let good men who have the true interests of the country at heart, band themselves together, not for public dinners and windy speeches, but for hearty co-operation, practical discussion, and

the prosecution of truly statesmanlike measures. Such a club, having a wide-spread organization, with branches in all the leading towns, by means of lectures, discussions, pamphlets, meetings and the use of the press, might rouse public feeling to united action in the furtherance of true reform, and the abolition of the abuses that now exist.

Our civil service has already attained gigantic dimensions. Nearly every tenth man you meet is in some degree or other a recipient of money from the public funds. If not checked, this threatens to menace the very foundations of stable government, and reduce the country to the condition of a vast lucky-bag, into which every hand shall be dipped to fish up as much plunder as his grasp can hold.

Lest some of my home readers may consider these strictures too sweeping, I would here extract a few paragraphs bearing on the subject, written under the signature "Capricornus," in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The writer is a man of sound common-sense; a shrewd observer, and an experienced politician, thoroughly conversant, from the observation of years, with every detail of colonial parliamentary life, and to the sentiments so capitally and clearly expressed, above his well-known signature, the hearty assent of the most patriotic and thinking men in the community is freely given.

After a masterly exposition of the tactics adopted by the hungry billet-seeker or bribe-devourer on the one hand, and the plausible government tout on the other, our censor proceeds thus:—

"This is Australian statesmanship. In ordinary weather, principles and policies are not much considered. These are only appealed to when a strong

breeze from a sectarian, popular, or national quarter sets in. Then it is surprising how quickly both Government and Opposition adopt appropriate catch-words, and how promptly they fall into their ranks to the call of the party bugle, whether the alarm sounded is on education, land-reform, or the beat of the drum ecclesiastic.

"Consistency on such occasions is of course not expected. What an honourable member said last year about denominational education, or free selection, is of very little consequence at a crisis when 'the country is in danger,' that is, when the party 'in,' runs a risk of going out, and patronage and pickings threaten to fall into the hands of the Opposition. But when the breeze blows over, things go back into their old groove, and the whole energy of the executive is directed to the one thing needful, the crowning achievement and *tour de force* always aimed at, being to buy a member and pay him with nothing. The man who can score a few such hits in a session is good for a seat in any Australian cabinet. Government and Opposition will alike bid for him, and when he wearies of the toils of the forum, the best padded chair in the civil service will be ready for him."

"The Civil servants," continues Capricornus, "even the highest, are in a false position. The Government action makes them mere machines; while in the Opposition some of the patriots, the tribunes of the people, make it very plain, that if they had their own way, they would order the treasury clerks to blacken their boots. Moreover, the civil servants hold their offices by so slender a tenure, and so much intrigue is daily at work to jockey them out of their seats, that their only safety is in seeing, knowing, saying, and

doing as little as possible. Old officials have been enticed into signing their resignations, by having pensions dangled before them, and they have found themselves turned adrift with a mere pittance between them and starvation. The vacancies, of course, were wanted for 'trade,' and they became valuable legal tender for the purchase of votes.

"Wariness, prudence, and the suppression of all action suggesting the existence of zeal or intelligence, are the best qualities for the government employ; consequently the most valuable capabilities of experienced officials, are neither cultivated nor encouraged. The honourable member, whose practical knowledge of colonial life has consisted in sanding sugar, or watering rum on the diggings, is *ex-officio* the superior, and consequently knows more about matters of public policy, than an officer who may have taken part in pioneering since the days of Sir Richard Bourke, or may be familiar with public documents from the foundation of the colony. Thus our legislators ignore and neglect the experience that might supply valuable data for further legislation, and the wise Civil servant sees nothing and does less."

One feature of colonial criticism, journalistic or otherwise, is this—that while a man in the colonies, writing in a colonial paper, lecturing on a colonial platform, or addressing a colonial audience, may get many really thinking and well-meaning men to side with him—no sooner does he go beyond the colony and publish his strictures, and perhaps adverse comments to the outside world, than nearly all classes unite to hound him down, and stigmatize him as a wholesale slanderer, and one who has broken all the ten commandments in a lump. The colonial papers teem with criticisms of the nature given

in the foregoing extracts—those at least of the better class, who make some pretensions to independence and honesty; but if an English or an American writer dare to publish an article one half so outspoken, there is a universal shriek of outraged honour and indignation.

It is in fact, the old story of husband and wife quarreling. They will bepummel each other unmercifully, but woe betide the unhappy wight who interferes in the domestic strife. Any observant student of the daily records of colonial journalism cannot fail to remark this. Many of the leading country journals are fearless and outspoken in their criticism. Their contempt of jobbery, and sense of outraged decency, as some more scandalous piece of iniquity than usual crops up, finds trenchant expression and vigorous enough denunciation; but they claim the monopoly to themselves. They are jealous of any outside intrusion on the domain of domestic strife. The *Times*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *San Francisco News Letter*, the author, public man on his travels, lecturer, or any foreign medium whatever, who raises the voice of adverse criticism, gets little of either courtesy or justice. The newspapers for once get unanimous, and wonder at the impudence and presumption of any outsider, not a colonial born and bred, daring to criticize their glorious country. Captain Cook and a few of the early governors are trotted out. The enormous extent and marvellous resources of the country are descanted on, and the soothing salve is applied to wounded self-esteem by the reflection, that after all, "if our members of parliament are a little rough, they are at least sincere. If jobbery is rampant, America and England have done much worse in bygone days, and are ready to do so again, and that in the

good time coming, when all our land shall have been sold, and there's no more of the public estate to fight over, things will shake into their correct places. Good men and true will come forward to take their share in public life."

And yet an old colonist, a lover of his adopted country, and shrewd, truthful man like *Capricornus*, can write thus. "There are," he says, "always a few old residents, the veterans of colonization, who see what is going on, and make their comments. They begin to say that our system of administration is calling to its flag all the vagabondism of the country, men who have neither families nor homes, without incentive to public or private duty, adventurers by circumstance, schemers by nature, here one year, away the next, no one knows where, with what they have gathered. Now a swagsman may be loafing for rations, and threatening the fences with a firestick; shortly he may be a bell-mouthed candidate for parliamentary honours; next year to be trafficking with her Majesty's Ministers for patronage and office, to fawn and grovel before his constituents, and to vilify and bully the unprotected, under the shield of parliamentary privilege."

Surely this is strong language. Yet these statements are no figment of a lively fancy, they are the sober words of truth, and could be borne out by an appeal to names, and dates, and places, within the knowledge of every man in New South Wales, who knows the rudiments of the parliamentary history of his country, during the last decade.

No wonder then, that the most capable men in the country shrink from entering an arena where the readiest and most serviceable weapons are abuse and

calumny. No wonder that the best men in the house itself, and the ablest journalists mourn over the flood of frothy Billingsgate that they try in vain to stem. No wonder that parliamentary institutions are dragged in the dust of popular contempt, and the political arena is left more and more to needy unprincipled adventurers and incapable vulgarians.[1]

[1] Perhaps no more trenchant criticism on the *calibre* and practices of an ignoble minority in our Parliament can be given than a bare, unvarnished report of one of its own debates. I refer the reader to the Appendix, where I have given the debate in full.

See Appendix, Note D.

CHAPTER XXV.

The land question—The burning question of the day—The land settlement—The early policy—Free selection—Objects of the Act of 1861—Abuses that have arisen—Repudiation looming in the distance—Feuds between squatter and selector—How the case now stands—Reasoning by analogy—The land system of India—Its broad and leading principles—How the revenues are raised—The Cornwallis Settlement—The Punjaub system—Periodical assessments—Waste lands reclamation in Oudh and the North-West—The present problem in Australia—No more alienation—Rotten legislation—Recent legislation—The new proposals—General summary.

THE burning question of the day in Australia, beyond all others, is undoubtedly the land question. The land law of the country, and its administration, the revenue derived from the land, the various problems that arise in connexion with the settlement and development of the land—these underlie all the social problems that agitate the community, and to her rotten system of land legislation, nearly all the troubles that afflict the body politic of New South Wales are directly traceable. Such, at least, is my opinion.

Still, even in these notes some notice must be taken of the most momentous subject now occupying the thoughts and speculations of my fellow-colonists. Even my modest contribution to the literature of the subject may not be without its value, seeing that I am perfectly disinterested. I do not possess a square

yard of Australian soil, and I bring to a consideration of the question neither bias nor prejudice.

Everybody is acquainted with the first uses to which the colony was put. The history of the penal settlement is well known. Expired term convicts, escapees, officials, and a few free settlers, holders of free Crown grants, were the first who acquired property in the soil of our colony. Settlement for long was a plant of slow growth, and the progress of the country was tardy, till the gold discoveries attracted the attention of the world. Before this, however, the pastoral capabilities of the new continent had been recognized, the squatting system had been inaugurated, and continues to this day. A pioneer penetrates into some unknown part of the immense territory of the interior, beyond the extreme verge of settled habitation, and there he sets up his abode. He "squats" down, and may escape, for a time, the payment of even the small tax, which the wisdom of Sir Richard Bourke imposed on the squatter, to bring his occupation within the pale of law and order, and to retain the right of the State in the soil intact.

Herds increased, cattle multiplied, squatters spread over the country in ever-increasing numbers, and then came the gold discoveries, which deluged the land with a flood of immigrants, who knew little, and cared less, about policy, statesmanship, future development, or past abuses; and who, so long as they could procure their beef, mutton, and flour, and their "miner's right," did not care to whom the land belonged, or how it was disposed of. So long as they could secure their mining claim and rations they were content.

The runs of the then squatting patriarchs were but sparsely stocked. Population was in excess of the

supplying power. Butchers' meat was at a premium, and enormous fortunes were made by these early shepherd kings. This was the case in 1854, and the causes of the sudden increase in value of the pastoral properties are now matter of history. The wool trade grew, and Australia became the land of promise for the Adullamites of all countries. The statesmen of the day began to ask themselves questions about the disposition of this magnificent estate, which old England had, with more than maternal generosity, divested herself of, and made over to her offspring on this side of the line. It was a magnificent bequest. How wofully it has been administered, and how miserably mismanaged, let the present chaotic muddle tell.

As a well-known writer on this subject, to whom I am under deep obligations for much information and valuable counsel, says,[1] in more condensed and vigorous language than I can well employ :—

"The form of settlement aimed at by the early governors was one of freeholds and villages, the properties being of all sizes, from the estate of thousands of acres down to the labourer's allotment of forty or fifty. By a graduated scale of distribution, neither altogether favouring the large nor the small settler, both were provided for, and the method suited those also who were neither capitalists nor labourers, thus avoiding the marked contrasts now shown everywhere, and the unbridged chasm that divides our two classes of holdings—the station and the selection.

"The frontages to rivers and main roads were economically allotted according to survey rules, and the unsold back country was left open in an easy way, so

[1] "Colonization in 1876." By Capricornus. Turner and Henderson, Sydney, 1876.

that the settlers might get the use of the grass for their stock at small cost.

"This method could not be said to have the merit of perfection; but there is proof that it allowed full scope to all rural industries; it economized the land, and it decidedly favoured the wholesome growth of population.

"Thus this early policy seems, it may be accidentally, to have, in some measure, hit a fair middle course between the extreme views now held by squatter and selector. The modern squatting theory looks upon population as objectionable, except in the form of vagrant labour, and pins its whole faith to the production of wool and live stock. The selector's theory, on the one hand, aims mainly at the settlement of population, but disregards the natural tendencies of country and climate, and professes (a profession seldom put in practice), to occupy the whole interior in small arable farms.

"With our present light it is easy to see to what extremes either one policy or the other, having full scope, would lead us. Carrying out the squatter's theory without check, we would have a regular plantation system, with absentee proprietors, and no country population; in fact, not a country or a nation in any sense at all, but a second West Indies, ruled by attorneys, bankers, and overseers. On the other hand, if it were possible to carry out the selector's theory (which practically is seldom attempted), we would have a community perhaps able to live, but producing nothing marketable, and consequently without a revenue, and unable to make railways and other public works.

"Our present combined, or rather, antagonistic

methods of squatting and selection, act like opposing forces let loose without restraint or foresight. The machinery works at the cost of immense waste, public injury, and private suffering, ruining equally squatters and selectors, wasting the territory, and above all effectually obstructing colonization. Under the old system there was only the one tenure, and that was the freehold grant. The early legislators seem to have known that human flesh and blood were as valuable staples as wool and tallow, and so without straining theory in either direction, they often succeeded, though in a patchy and imperfect way, in founding what turned out to be wholesome and durable settlement.

"The preliminary survey under which these lands were first allotted has proved a safeguard against many evils, and the result appears now in striking contrast to the modern system of selection before survey, since under the early method conflicting claims hardly ever arose and all waste in distribution was prevented.

"Modern legislation, on the other hand, prompts both squatter and selector to pick the eyes out of the country, and thus has been inaugurated a system of attack and reprisals, as wasteful of the lands as it is hurtful to the union and welfare of the people; and from this source, mainly, is derived the enormous land revenue now coming into the treasury. Swarms of politicians and officials live on the fruit of this discord, and many a ministry has reaped a harvest of place and patronage, and enriched the coffers of the State, by threatening one interest and cajoling the other. If the purpose of our land administration is to colonize New South Wales, then there is much to be said in favour of the early method; if, on the contrary, we want to

choke settlement, and to get a large revenue to spend in Sydney, then our present arrangements are admirable; for while the law encourages the selector to harass the squatter, it also supplies means to the squatter to extinguish his adversary. This can generally be managed by spending money freely, though indeed the ultimate result is occasionally fatal to both sides.

"Such, then, was the first form of settlement aimed at, and, as its remains show, with some success; but in 1861 the system had for a generation been displaced by squatting occupation. By this time the squattages had largely got into the hands of owners to whom all these changes of pasture, policy, and tenure, were as old fables. Few of them knew anything of former times. Unlike the first squatters, who took possession of their runs without either paying or asking leave, they had paid heavy prices for stock and stations. Ostensibly they were great proprietors, but being heavily weighted with high prices and interest many of them were working merely for the chance of reversion, and consequently they had no views on land policy except such as were immediately practical and personal to themselves.

"Squatting had, in fact, to a large extent been sucked into the machinery of commerce. Legislation had done all it could to facilitate transfer and mortgage, in very marked contrast to its ordinary delay and apathy; and this end was served so effectually that it is much easier at the present day to get the transfer of a squattage of half a million of acres, than to get a freehold grant of a plot of ground to make a garden.

"Necessarily it followed that all those views favourable to real colonization which marked the early policy were virtually abandoned. Under these circumstances

free selection arose. It was the instinctive protest of the multitude against what was, as it affected them, national confiscation; but, unguided by reason, it struck not against the system, but against a class; and worked by faction the evils it has caused more than balance the good it has done."

Free selection before survey has been the rock on which the more recent land legislation of New South Wales has split. The author of the Land Act of 1861, Sir John Robertson, has been credited by all, friends and foes alike, as having had a sincere desire to promote settlement and develope the country by planting a productive population on the soil. Surely he could little have foreseen what would be the result of his famous experiment.

The professed objects of the Act of 1861 were doubtless these. First, to promote the settlement of the country, and, secondly, to favour the agricultural industry. In both these directions it has proved a signal failure. Enough has surely been said to show that the great mistake was in not recognizing the already existing grazing industry, which had become legalized by custom, with which all the business interests of the country had become intimately bound up, and round which had been consolidated rights and interests acknowledged by the unwritten law of use and wont, and guaranteed by custom and legal recognition.

What its author fondly hoped from it was the creation of a contented prosperous farming population. What it has actually done is written in the records of fraud, perjury, extortion, bribery, which go to form the voluminous mountains of land-office literature in the colony; in the bitter feuds that rage like Corsican

vendettas over the length and breadth of the interior; in the nomadic breed of dummy selectors and licenced extortioners, who only differ from the reivers and moss-troopers of old, in that they levy their black mail by parchments and legal quibbles, instead of by falchion and Jethart axe.

The advocates of the Robertson Land Laws, on the other hand, insist that the system has worked fairly well, that a little patching and tinkering is all that is needed to make the law perfect; that they *have* settled a farming population on the soil; that they *have* given an impetus to agriculture and an impulse to profitable tillage, and that the present outcry is factious, hypocritical, visionary, impracticable, Utopian, absurd. What are really the facts? In an issue of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, June, 1879, appears the following, which, I think, very fairly states the case:—

"In reply to the argument that the selection of fourteen million acres had not proportionally increased the amount of agriculture in the colony, Mr. Garrett, in a recent debate, contended that a great deal of new land had been broken up in interior districts, but that the result was not perceptible in the statistical returns, because a corresponding amount of old land had gone out of tillage, and that the extension of agriculture in new districts was only checked by the difficulty of getting the produce to a profitable market. This statement is no doubt in the main correct, though it is no adequate defence of the law. During the last fifteen years there has been a considerable transfer of the locale of agricultural operations.

"In the early days, except for purely local wants, wheat could only be grown to a profit on the coast lands, and many a good crop those lands have yielded

in favourable seasons; but much of the land was worn down with constant cropping, and the coast wheat was very liable to the weevil, and latterly to the rust. It has been a change for the better to have wheat grown in the more elevated inland districts, because we have got a better article, have had it grown nearer to the squatting country, which furnishes a market for a portion of it, and can bring the surplus to Sydney by rail; and there is also the further advantage that many tenants have become freeholders. But having large agricultural districts to bring into occupation, the rational course would have been to open up those districts to occupation by railroads, and to remove the pastoral occupiers as fast as we could replace them by agricultural settlers. The state could then have got the full value for its land, which would have helped to pay for the railroads, the pastoral occupiers would not have been prematurely disturbed, and the agriculturists would not have had to fight their way against the prior occupants. New Zealand, which, after many experiments and some failures, is working its way towards a true conception of the great value of the public estate, and the conditions under which that estate can be most profitably disposed of and occupied, has of late done something towards illustrating the policy of reserving land till it is made accessible by railways, and then selling it when it could be tilled to advantage. In New South Wales the policy has been to pepper the colony with free selections; a plan which has been less profitable to the revenue, and less productive of improvement and *bonâ-fide* occupation, than systematic colonization would have been. The amount of new agriculture to which Mr. Garrett points, and which at present is little more than a substitute

for old tillage, is of course well enough in itself; but it is no adequate proof for the purpose of his argument. What he had to show was that the Land Law had worked well for the purpose for which it was intended. He ought to have shown that the country should be reasonably contented to have got as much agriculture in proportion to the population as it had before—that this was a good result for eighteen years' trial of the land system, and that it was a feat of statesmanship to sell fifty acres in order to get one cultivated. We have increased very greatly the expenses of alienating the land, and we have diminished the receipts; we have enormously augmented the complexity of the land administration, so that no Minister or Under-Secretary can compass the work, and an army of land agents has been called into existence to expedite the business of those who can afford to pay them; we have rendered the tenure of every pastoral holding in the country uncertain; we have set every squatter to fight those of his servants and neighbours who try to select against him, and to employ as his dummies those who are amenable to him. We have spotted every run with pre-emptive improvement and volunteer selections, taken up simply to make the rest of the run as little useful as possible to the state or the other occupiers; we have forced to auction enormous areas of land, the sale of which has gorged the treasury with premature revenue, and demoralized constituencies by creating a scramble for public expenditure; we have absorbed the private capital of the country prematurely in an unprofitable investment, and raised the rate of interest against every merchant, trader, producer, and improver; and by alienating to pastoralists the best agricultural land, we have arrested agricultural settle-

ment for the next generation. The one great result which it was sought to achieve, and which we ought to be able to show, is the settlement of yeomanry, corresponding to these immense efforts and sufferings. Are the figures which Mr. Garrett adduced a fair and adequate compensation for the cost of producing them? We have succeeded in turning some tillage land into pasture, and an equal amount of pasture-land into tillage. We have shifted wheat-growing from one district to another, and we can boast that we are not more dependent on our neighbours for breadstuffs than we were eighteen years ago. Can we triumphantly call on all the world to recognize that that is a satisfactory result of the alienation of fourteen millions of acres? If not, *cadit quæstio.*

"If, eighteen years ago, when the people were in the heyday of triumph over the passing of the Land Bill, its exact results at the end of eighteen years could have been placed before them, would they have been satisfied with the prospect? And if they would not have been satisfied then, ought we to be satisfied now? Is it wise to shut our eyes to obvious facts, and say that the system only wants a little trimming and then it will be perfect?"

The system has been simply this: the squatter had no fixity of tenure; there has been no systematic survey of the country, such as, for instance, the trigonometrical survey in India. As for a cadastral survey, field by field, that is a thing unknown to Australian farmers. Ostensibly to induce settlement, the whole land has been thrown open to intending settlers, who could select anywhere, under certain easily fulfilled conditions of residence, improvement, payment by instalments, and so on. The administration of the Act has been

lax and dishonest, has become so much of a mere political tool to be handled by experts, the evasions have become so universal, the political influence of these state creditors has become so powerful, that wholesale repudiation is no longer hinted at, but boldly advocated. *Ex post facto* legislation is to wipe out all incumbrances and set the selector free, with a clean slate, to select more land at a lower rate of payment, on easier conditions, and with more liberal allowances as to credit.

The story in Australia is as old and well-worn and threadbare as the reputations of some of her leading statesmen. Selectors had no difficulty at first in picking out likely pieces of land, on which they ran up a miserable structure; and while pretending to fulfil the conditions of their contract with the state, they commenced a war of skirmishing hostilities against the squatter. These led to reprisals. The affair from being one of outposts, soon became a general engagement along the whole line. If the farming selector was a *bonâ-fide* colonist, he found himself subjected to every annoyance that the wealth, energy, malice, jealousy, or ill-will of his powerful pastoral neighbour could set in motion against him. His fences were destroyed, his cattle impounded, his fields invaded, and every device that ingenuity could imagine was used to disgust him with his holding, and compel him to throw it up. If he were, as was not at all improbable, a scheming knave, he adopted these very tactics himself; and made himself such a thorn in the side of the shepherd potentate, that it ended in his being bought off; and without having fulfilled any of the conditions of his bargain with the state, he accepted the purchase-money—the black mail which his per-

verse energy had extorted; and off he would go to repeat the same game somewhere else.

This state of things is no novelty to the Australian reader. To bring it more forcibly home to the general reader in England or India, let me give two examples. They are but two out of hundreds which could be adduced, to show how this disastrous attempt at legislation operated, and is even now operating, and how under a system which tolerates such infamous dodgery, nothing but lowered morality and widespread class antagonism could be expected as the natural results.

A squatter in Rivirina had a large flock of ewes lambing in a 6000 acre paddock. Two men selected 640 acres each, in the middle of this paddock, and turned into the paddock 2500 ewes also lambing. The damage amounted to the loss of the whole of the lambs, and the selectors had to be bought out with a cheque for a large amount. This piracy was quite within the limits of the law, and sanctioned by the Act of 1861.

In another district, a squatter had a paddock containing a fine lot of stud bulls. A man selected in the heart of the paddock, and the day after his application was entered at the Local Land Office, he impounded fifteen of the bulls for running on his land. This also was strictly legal. Of course extortion in this case, as in the other, was the object.

Indeed the only part of the country in which selection has been in any truth successful and legitimate, has been in that tract known as the old settled districts, which was never under the squatting tenure, but which was allotted under the earlier land system of the colony. Even there the largest and best portions of the land having already been granted by the early

governors, the localities open to selectors only consisted of back creeks and scattered patches and fragments of land, and the holdings are but cotter holdings after all, or very small and unexpansive farm-steads. Still, this is the only part of the colony where selection may be even remotely claimed as having been successful; but the success merely amounts to an increase of population; in farming industry there has been no advance. The occupants keep a few cows, run them on any one's grass, let them die of starvation when there is no grass. And it would be difficult to show any other pursuit that has sprung up and been successfully followed under this method of settlement. To come back to the feud now raging under the operation of the Act of 1861.

To save themselves, the squatters were forced to adopt the most desperate expedients. They had either to buy up at auction scattered patches of their runs, or put in dummies, make-believe selectors, who perfunctorily performed all the requirements of the law, and having satisfied apparently all the conditions, the selection again merged into the holding of the squatter. The law was evaded, the state robbed of another slice of its patrimony, and the land that should have been turned into a smiling farm, the home of a prosperous yeoman, reverted to the pristine waste of grass and scrub; and the sheep, the dingo, and the kangaroo, divided its dominion between them. Everywhere the "eyes of the land" were discerned by the scheming selector, or snapped up by the desperate squatter. Where the coveted spot could be purchased out and out, money was raised at ruinous rates, and thus the runs came to be mortgaged to the banks, who watched the fierce strife benignly. Meantime the continued

drain began to tell even on the banks. In this conjuncture, a feat of juggling was done worthy of the genius of an Aberdonian Jew. The land was being bought up right and left. Dummies had to be hired or bribed. Selectors had to be bought off. Ruinous suits had to be defended or initiated. Land had to be paid for in part at least, and deposits on selections had to be made in some degree at least, where the law could not be evaded, or the authorities refused to be bribed and hoodwinked—and as the treasury coffers were full to repletion, the suggestion was made that this money should be loaned back again to the banks.

Bank directors in Australia are nearly as powerful and command almost as many votes as the brewers and publicans, and Government had no difficulty in acceding to the suggestion. So, then, while the treasury gathered in the crisp notes and bright gold with the one hand, with the other they passed it on again to the banks at a low rate of interest, to be circulated once more, and lent out by them at a high rate of interest. So the modern merry Australian game was played.

Then came the bad seasons, when drought supervened, prices fell, and here we are confronted with the inevitable crash that thinking men had long foretold. Suddenly the banks awake to the fact that no more money must be lent upon the land. Suddenly the government begin to cast about for ways and means to redeem the lavish promises of public works for the proletariat, of roads, bridges, schools of arts, culverts, drains, dredges, wharfs, schools, and other bribes, which had been promised to the country constituencies throughout the land as a reward for obedient votes. And so the case stands, the squatters cannot .pay up,

and the banks cannot foreclose, for the securities are unsaleable and inconvertible; the Government dare not come down on the banks and withdraw their advances, for commerce would be crippled, credit would be gone, and place-hunters and place-holders would be penniless! For the present foreign gold has floated the labouring ship of state. But nobody believes that foreign loans will for ever supersede the necessity of dealing with the land question itself. And nobody who has weighed the seriousness of that question believes that tinkering the old Land Act will suffice. A new Land Law is the only true remedy.

It will be well to turn our eyes to any other country where analogous problems offer themselves. In India especially have some of the most perplexing and intricate problems relating to the land been solved. By a comparison of plans, policies, and pursuits, so far apart and widely dissimilar to our own, we may be able to strike on some points that might guide us here (New South Wales) in dealing with the all-important subject of a reform of our land laws.

Let us turn our eyes for a moment, then, to the East. The fundamental principle of the land system of India, that which underlies all others and on which her whole land policy is based, is this. The land belongs inalienably to the State, and must contribute its fair quota to the expenses of government. When we conquered India, we found the land occupied by innumerable petty potentates, princes, nobles, and village communes. There was every kind of title, from that of the most absolute despot, grinding his poor peasantry to the very dust, rack-renting every cultivator, and not only taxing the land with a burden greater than could be borne, but enforcing feudal and

military service as well from the occupiers of the soil. As a direct and marked contrast to this, there were innumerable village communes, where the land around the hamlet was held in common, worked in common, and the produce equally divided among the dwellers in the little commonwealth. There were also vast stretches of land held by the priests, as being part of the endowment of some famous temple or sacred shrine. Guilds and corporations held lands under charter, or by deed of gift. Amid all, however, no matter what the title, no matter how held, a certain amount of revenue was paid by all to the paramount ruling power. Wherever the power of the great Mogul dynasty extended, wherever its authority was recognized, this tribute was raised from the land. When we overthrew the Mogul dynasty, and became the conquerors of India, our soldier statesmen recognized the fitness of this state of things. When, therefore, they got time to organize a system of government, they resolved that while maintaining a firm sway over the Empire which they had founded by conquest, they would cause the land, as formerly, to support the expenses of a Government which maintained the rights of persons and property, and enabled the cultivators and possessors of the soil to enjoy the fruits of that soil in security, peace, and quietness.

We shall see as we go on how this principle works; what modifications have been made on it in the Punjaub, the North-West, and other non-regulation provinces. But the fundamental grand principle that the land is the property of the State, to be held in trust for the common good of the nation, and contribute its fair share to the expenses of Government, is never lost sight of. I will endeavour to show how far

the application of the same principle, modified to suit our different circumstances, should be recognized, and acted on in any reform of our land policy in Australia.

The land tax is administered and collected by the Board of Revenue. All the country is accurately surveyed and mapped out into divisions, which are again subdivided till the smallest plot of land is reached. The principal officer of a division is termed a Commissioner; under him come collectors, who are assisted by deputy-collectors, sub-deputy-collectors, and other functionaries of lower grades. The collector is the chief executive officer in his district. To him are subordinate the police, the magistracy, and the lower grades of judicial officers who administer the law; but his principal duty is to collect the Government revenue.

Every land-holder in his district is registered in the records of his court. The land-holder's title, the extent of his possessions, the amount he has to pay to Government, are all minutely recorded. The land-holder can sell or mortgage his property, is free to deal with it as he pleases, so long as the Government revenue is paid. He may split it up and subdivide it, leave it to his heirs, give it away, or dispose of his right in it, in any legal manner he chooses; but he cannot alienate the right of the State to a certain percentage of the profits arising from it. The owner may die, may leave the country, may become bankrupt, may divest himself of all right, title, and interest he has in the land, but the land itself, the actual soil still remains liable in the Government charges upon it. All transactions affecting the land, all bonds of purchase, all transfers, mortgages, deeds, and leases, must

be made known to the Collector and registered among his records. Every plot of land is accurately measured and surveyed, and its position, extent, and capabilities correctly known. The *kist*, as it is called—that is, the contribution to government—takes precedence of every other claim. Should it fall into arrears, the Collector can sue summarily for it. He can attach the property, and sell it in satisfaction of his demand, with, of course, proper legal procedure, and due and formal notice. In return, so long as the government demand is satisfied, you possess an inalienable right to your property, and receive all the support of government in upholding your right.

In Bengal, which is the richest, most fertile, and perhaps the most densely populated province of our Indian Empire, an arrangement was made by the Marquis Cornwallis, when he was Viceroy, which is called the Permanent Settlement. This famous Settlement and the Queen's Proclamation are the *Magnæ Chartæ* of the Bengalees. At the time of the Settlement, every property in Bengal was assessed. What was then considered a fair moiety of the productive value of the land was set apart and arranged to be paid, as the contribution to government. Agreeing to pay this, and taking their title direct from the government with this proviso binding for all time coming, the land-owners received a guarantee that, as long as England was the ruling power in India, this would be the *maximum* amount claimed by government, and so long as it was paid they would be upheld in the possession of their estates.

It was considered a masterly piece of legislation at the time. It settled once and for ever all the multitudinous investigations, doubts, and litigations that

used to beset the government officials; but under a firm and stable government—under just laws wisely administered—the land has so immensely increased in value, that the revenue raised under the Permanent Settlement in Bengal is now a mere nothing as compared with the wealth that is drawn from the soil.

The land-owners who acquired a title under the Permanent Settlement are now rolling in wealth. Waste lands have been reclaimed, roads have been made, bridges built, rivers have been deepened and confined between vast restraining banks, raised by the finest engineering skill of the age; canals and railways and public works have been constructed at enormous cost; communications have improved, and all the countless triumphs of modern science and invention have been inaugurated, to increase the wealth and develope the resources of the country. And yet the land which reaps this benefit, which has been one thousandfold enriched, whose value has risen out of all proportion to the revenue which it yields—does not contribute now to the expenses of the government and the revenue of the country one iota more than it did when the Permanent Settlement was made, and before the vast tide of progress and prosperity began to flow.

Tenants who hold lands from the great land-owners, small farmers and cultivators who have tenant rights, who hold under lease, and pay rent to the land-owners, have had their rent enhanced, and competition for land, with improved agriculture and better prices for products, has increased the marketable value of landed estates enormously within the last twenty years. But so long as the land-owners pay the old established assessment that was fixed under the Permanent Settlement they enjoy all the fruits of this enhanced value,

and the revenue thus has become inelastic, while the expenses of government have increased, and are still increasing more and more. This necessitated other methods of raising revenue. Some of these, such as the income-tax, were so objectionable and irritating that after a struggle they had to be withdrawn. A heavy customs tariff, however, has been imposed. Necessaries of life, such as salt, are burdened with a heavy duty. The poor, the hard-working, the consumer, are thus made to pay an undue quota of the revenue; and the land, which should bear the main burden of supporting a government, pours in its rich and abundant treasure into the plethoric purse of the sleek Zemindar. These Zemindars are powerful and rich. They are the aristocracy of Bengal. They possess a monopoly of intelligence and influence with the people, and to ask them now to submit to a readjustment of the incidence of taxation on the land would probably cause a tremendous commotion. They appeal to our solemn assurance given with all the dignity and weight of supreme authority that the Permanent Settlement, as its name signifies, was not for a season or an age, but for all time. It matters not to them that we struggle with a deficit every year, that we must devise schemes of taxation that cripple industry, harass the poor, retard the progress, and hamper the wheels of further improvement and advancement in the arts of peace, progress, commerce, and learning. It is presumably difficult to fleece a Greek or a Jew, and proverbially puzzling how to take breeks from a Highlander; but these feats are comparatively easy when contrasted with the task of making a Hindoo Zemindar or landholder lose sight of self.

Now, human nature is pretty much the same in

every land and under every clime. When we shall have sold all our land here, divested ourselves of our birthright, alienated the patrimony of the country from us for ever, and allowed the land to become the property of a wealthy few; in fact, when a land-holding aristocracy shall have sprung up here, as infallibly it must spring up if we allow them to buy the land out and out instead of leasing it, how can we suppose that it will be any more easy then to get them to listen to the dictates of patriotism than it is for the Hindoo Zemindar to listen to them now? Our people use the same argument—"We have bought the land out and out. We can command political influence as well as you. Go and raise your taxes on bread, and corn, and oil, and wine, and clothing. You have no more to do with the land—that is ours. You alienated it by your own act, and now you must stand the consequences."

Now, in the Punjaub, in the vast extent of the north-west provinces, and in the fertile kingdom of Oudh, and other parts of India, there were men at the helm of affairs, who had a more prophetic vision, who took a keener glance into futurity than did Cornwallis. They recognized the grand principle that the land itself, and not the land-owners, was the backbone and mainstay of a wise and equitable method of raising a revenue, and the system they inaugurated, and which is now being practised, was briefly this. The land-owners held direct from Government, after a careful investigation into their titles, much in the same manner as was done in Bengal. The apportionment of the share which the land subscribed towards defraying the expenses of Government was, however, only made for a certain limited period. It was not a permanent settlement for all time, but liable to be re-

arranged periodically at fixed and stated times. The ultimate term was settled at thirty years. Every thirty years, therefore, in these provinces the land is assessed under government supervision, and by duly authorized and qualified government officials. If the material prosperity of the district has largely increased, and if the land has shared in the general augmentation of value, the new assessment will be in some degree higher for the ensuing term than for the one just lapsed. If, on the contrary, land has decreased in value from purely natural causes, and not from neglect, bad management, or preventible circumstances, the land-owner may state his case, and succeed in getting his assessment lightened. The tricks resorted to by the wily oriental to throw dust in the eyes of the collector and his assessors are innumerable. For the two or three years immediately preceding a new assessment they will sometimes allow lands to go out of cultivation altogether, and relapse into jungle. They will try to bribe subordinate native officials, and exhaust all their ingenuity in devising schemes by which they may have their lands under assessed.

In both theory and practice, however, the system has been found to work well. After all, the assessment is very light, and it comes back to the landholder in an indirect way, for he levies an equal amount from his tenants; and in this way every one interested in the land becomes a contributor to the expenses of the State, and in such an equable manner that no one feels the burden. As the value of the land increases, the revenues share in the general elasticity. They develope and expand with the development of the agricultural wealth of the country. Direct taxation

is avoided, and the incidence of the tax falls lightly on all classes.

In cases where lands are held directly from the Crown the tenant pays *rent*, as well as the land revenue *kist*, or assessment. For example, a farmer holds a small farm from a landed proprietor, for which he pays rent, according to the quality of the land, and the prices of produce ruling in the locality. The proprietor pays to government his assessed tribute or tax on the land, and if he fails to pay this, the government can attach the rents or crops of the farmer, giving him legal resource to recover as against his landlord. If, on the other hand, the farmer leases Crown lands, with no land-holder or proprietor intervening between him and the Crown, he pays his rent direct into the district treasury, and gets a receipt from the collector.

If he continues to pay his rent, and cultivates the land for twelve years without a break, he acquires what is called a "tenant right," which is a vendible, negotiable right, title, or interest. A farmer with a tenant right cannot be dispossessed. He can bequeath his tenant right to his heirs and successors. It is a duly sanctioned and recognized title to the land he occupies, and can only lapse by his own act, or by his failing to pay his rent to the Crown.

In determining the rent to be paid by tenants, government officials call for tenders from cultivators willing to settle on the land, and can accept the highest or lowest, as they please; but the more commonly adopted method is carefully to assess the lands according to their quality, and striking an average rental of the surrounding villages, quality for quality, make that the basis for their demand on the cultivator or occupier.

Besides all this, large reserves of forest land are held exclusively by government, and are conserved and managed by the Forest Department, whose officials will yield to none in the world for zeal and high scientific acquirements. Reserves are also made for lines of railway, for military roads, for recreation-grounds, and for other public purposes.

Under the Waste Land Rules a grantee, who holds land from the Indian government, is bound to conform to all the requirements of the Act, under pain of resumption. These rules are shortly to the effect that the land must be reclaimed to half its extent within twenty years. At the end of every five years the improved portions are measured. During the first five years an eighth must have been reclaimed; after ten years a quarter; after fifteen years three-eighths; and by twenty years a half. It is then assessed and a rent taken from the grantee corresponding to the average rent of like land in the ten nearest surrounding villages. During the first twenty years the grantee pays no rent whatever, but if any of his measurements do not come up to the required amount at any of the periods for inspection, his grant is at once liable to resumption.

The foregoing is a very rough and imperfect sketch of the main features of the land policy of India. There are a thousand details which it would be entirely impossible to compress within the limits at my disposal here, but my readers, if they have followed me thus far, will now have a pretty fair general idea of how the land is managed in our great eastern empire.

We will now, however, come a little nearer home, and as doubtless most of my Australian readers have

the ambition to become at some time or other land-owners in this colony, and are, I presume, interested in the well-being of the country, and laudably anxious for its welfare and progress, we will just glance at our system here, and see whether it be the wisest that might have been conceived. At present our statesmen and legislators are jubilant and complacent; our treasury coffers are full; we are expending large sums of our accumulated capital on public works and railways. Taxation, too, does not press very heavily on the people; education is progressing, and all this prosperity is due to the sale of our landed estate. But by total alienation, by forced auction sales, and wholesale renunciation at a low upset price, we are burning the candle at both ends. We are making no provision for the future; we are spending our capital instead of living on our interest. Land can be purchased at an upset price of 1*l.* per acre; nay, so eager is our government to get quit of its birthright, to alienate the heritage of the nation, that for five shillings paid down one can get possession of his acre of land; the remaining fifteen shillings being payable by deferred payments extending over fifteen years. What, too, has been done in the matter of reserves? Look at our townships; what reserves have been made for parks, pleasure-grounds, and spaces for public buildings? What accommodation has been made for our largely increasing railway traffic? In a few short years the land about most of our railway stations will be too confined for the traffic requirements, and the nation will have to buy back at an enormously enhanced price what was formerly part of its own birthright.

Referring to a previous debate on the present

tinkering patchwork Land Law Amendment Act, the *Herald* thus proceeds :—

"Mr. Hoskins asserted a few weeks ago in the house that the evils which existed under the old land system exceeded those which had sprung up under the legislation of 1861. The assertion was singularly at variance with the facts, as anybody who would take a comprehensive view of the general consequences of that legislation would be compelled to admit. There were, however, various grounds for complaint under the old system, and their existence, in a large measure, accounted for that eager desire for change which made the cry of free selection before survey so popular, and swept away all opposition to the law which gave it effect. But these antediluvian evils—these complaints that prevailed before the flood—arose out of weak and defective administration rather than bad law. So much has been admitted by men whose official experience lends their opinions weight. The administration of the old law failed to place in the market—whether as to quantity, quality, or suitability of subdivision—the land that was required for *bonâ-fide* settlement. The new law was introduced to cure this defect. As the department had failed to anticipate the demand for land, and had not held it ready in abundance in suitable portions, and in various parts of the country, for sale to the people, it was thought best that the people should be allowed to go all over the country, wherever they liked, and choose for themselves in advance of the department, leaving it to the officials of the state to follow them up, and set all things straight afterwards. This was a mistake. The remedy chosen was not appropriate to the disease. A failure in administration having been the cause of the trouble, the true remedy

would have been to make the administration more efficient. Instead of that, the law was changed, and a new system was set up, under which it was made easier for people to go upon the land, but greater scope than before was afforded for negligent or corrupt administration, and the risks that might accrue were thrown mainly upon the state.

"Free Selection before Survey was supposed to be the very embodiment of simplicity. It has proved in experience to be the source of endless complication, difficulty, and dispute. The intention was to save expense and trouble at the outset. The effect has been to increase both to an indefinite extent. Instead of providing against doubt and conflict of interest beforehand, it has provided facilities and inducements for both; and thus the government, in following up the selector, has had an amount of work to do in clearing up uncertainties, rectifying errors, and deciding between antagonistic claims, enormously in excess of the work it would have had to do if it had preceded the selector instead of allowing him the initiative.

"It is not, perhaps, surprising that a system which was introduced under a misapprehension of facts and principles should have been administered without regard to the requirements and the dangers of the situation. As the defectiveness of the old administration was to be cured by a change in the law, it was not, perhaps, very remarkable that the need for vigorous and effective administration under the new law was under-estimated. In reality, there was more need for vigilance and firmness than ever, but for years together the government was asleep as to the new conditions which the law had created, and the waking did not come until after the seeds of wrong had been

sown broadcast. We are now reaping the harvest. We are now bewailing the wholesale alienation of the public lands for the purpose of forming vast pastoral estates and barring settlement. We are now witnessing the application of a check to commercial and industrial enterprise by a tightness of the money market superinduced by the unnecessary and unprofitable investment of capital in the purchase of land. We are now watching the gradual corruption of the political atmosphere by the subordination of public to private interests in connexion with land transactions and the distribution of the spoil. We are becoming familiar with retrospective legislation for the wholesale surrender of public claims, and the chief explanation of all this is, that there has been a worse failure of administration under the new law than under the old. The fault lies primarily in the law, which laid new duties upon the government without providing more definitely and imperatively for their discharge; and, secondarily, in the *laches* of successive governments, which either did not perceive, or would not recognize, the responsibilities thrust upon them.

"The passing of the Act of 1875, with its special provisions for inquiry and inspection, was the first practical and broad recognition of duties that ought to have been recognized and fulfilled long before. But a great deal of the mischief had then been done, and the awakening which then took place was an awakening to the presence of work in arrears. From that time to this there has been an ineffectual struggle with these arrears, for the load is ever accumulating. The numerical strength of the lands department has been increased. Under Mr. Garrett alone, it has been shown, some four hundred persons were appointed. But,

in a business of such magnitude and complication, with fresh transactions every day, there is an irresistible pressure on account of current work, and it has been found simply impossible to work off arrears with the force available. The chances are that, in these days of sponges and retrospection, unless some special effort be soon made, the difficulty will be met by sacrificing public interests in the gross, on the plea that it would be too costly and troublesome to assert them. And, as we are under responsible government, nobody will then be held responsible.

"There ought, however, in justice to the public, to be some serious endeavours to prevent the adoption of so discreditable a conclusion. The present assembly appears to be unwilling to disturb the foundation of the land law. The more reason, then, is there for calmly and courageously facing the situation which that law has created. The colony is now suffering from the defective administration of the new law as it was suffering from a similar cause (operating within narrower limits) under the old one. If the legislature is unwilling now to do what it did then, and change the law, the least that it ought to do is to take measures to enforce vigorous and effective administration. There is a choice between two courses. The government may be allowed to take things easily, let complications, disputes, and uncertainties still multiply, and the heap of arrears accumulate, until it is shovelled up into the scavenger's cart, and got rid of as a mass of festering rubbish. Or the government may be pressed to do its duty, work off arrears, and keep them down in future at any cost, even if the whole of the money for which the land is sold should be absorbed in the process. There is no intermediate course. The pro-

blem cannot be solved by affecting to ignore its existence. The leading politicians of the hour may say that they are not bound to solve it. But if it is left to solve itself, *ambulando*, the country will suffer heavily, in money and morals."

This puts the problem fairly before the reader. The question presses for a solution, and there can be no shirking it.

To revert again to our argument.

When all the state land has been sold and all that is worth buying shall have been bought—when no further cash shall come flooding the treasury from the proceeds of land sales, what then is to be done? Would it not be much simpler and much wiser to sell the land, if it *must* be sold, under a system assimilating in its main features to the policy of the Punjaub, or do away with land sales altogether, and establish a system of crown leases? In any case, whatever system obtains, the state should retain the right to a small share of the profits. After thirty, forty, or fifty years, or any period that may be determined, the lands could be again re-assessed or re-leased, and a new settlement made. It would act in much the same way as the Scotch feu system. All lands would be classified according to quality, and contribute a small quota to the expenses of the state. It need not be much; one penny an acre on the superficies of one district alone in this land would raise an immense revenue. It would scarcely be felt by the landowners.

Is it not a notorious fact now, and a scandal to our civilization and our government, that all the land round the centres of population is in the hands of a few monopolists, who boast that there they have a patrimony for their children, and it can lie neglected,

untilled, and barren, till the expenditure of state money shall have enhanced its value, and made it easy to sell it at enormous profits. The expenditure of public money is augmenting the value of this land a thousand-fold, and yet it contributes not a mite to keep up the state. We cry about settling a productive population on our soil, yet, if a *bonâ-fide* agriculturist wishes to settle, he must go far away into the back country before he can plough a single furrow, and the expenses of transit eat up all the profits on his produce. The land near the towns is locked up. The state is working for the monopolist. His land is increasing daily in value, not by his own industry, but by the expenditure of state funds, and the inauguration of state improvements; and the *bonâ-fide* tiller of the soil, the hard-working producer, the struggling farmer, is banished to the far interior, and the state reaps not one fraction of benefit from the enormously enhanced value of the land which it has alienated from itself by its suicidal policy of land sales. With a judicious and equitable land tax, the land would *have* to be cultivated. It would *have* to yield its produce, and the state would reap the benefit. The land-holder would perforce be compelled to go in for improvements, and, instead of our towns and cities being surrounded with barren slopes and dense scrubs, fenced-in wildernesses of desolation, they would nestle amid smiling fields and cultivated farms. A land tax would relieve us of tariffs, duties, and imports that vex, and harass, and worry us. By the alienation of our state lands, we are mortgaging our very existence as a nation, and wilfully, and recklessly, and sinfully, for the sake of a little immediate gain, destroying all chance of our taking our place in the van of the vigorous phalanx of

the nations that are to rule the earth at no far-distant future.

As I write (June, 1879) an amending Act on the Lands Alienation Act of 1861—the second attempt at patchwork on that disastrous measure—is receiving the finishing touches in the Upper Chamber, having passed through the popular house. The glaring defects in our land administration had become so notorious, that even infatuated self-complacency and interested partisanship could no longer ignore them. Before the whole wide issue was put before the people —after a comprehensive liberal scheme of electoral reform had extended and equalized the representation of the people in Parliament—this present measure had been promised, avowedly as merely a stop-gap. "So far, however, from dealing only with matters of detail"—I quote again from a current leader in the *Sydney Morning Herald*—"the measure as it now stands contains a new principle of very wide application, and of the very first importance. It introduces the principle of retrospective legislation, and it alters, as against the crown, covenants formally made between the crown and free-selectors. But to alter the bargain with free-selectors is a matter of such importance that the people at large, who are financially interested in the matter, ought to have a voice in it.

"It is impossible to put exactly into figures the money value of what the people of the colony are asked to give up. We know that about fourteen million acres have been free-selected, and if the law had been rigidly observed, all selections that are fully three years old would have had their improvements, and residence occupation would have advanced in proportion. We know, however, that this is not the case, and as

certificates of conformity have not yet issued for a large part of the land, the government is still in a position to insist on its rights, and to get from the favoured purchaser the return which he promised to give in consideration of the cheapness of his purchase. Selection has gone on at a much greater rate of late years than it did at first, and about seven million acres have been taken up since 1875, and for all these lands it is proposed to reduce by one-half the amount of improvement. Adding, therefore, what may be due on previous purchases, the titles to which have not yet been perfected, we shall probably be below the truth if we estimate the value of improvements surrendered at four millions sterling. This is a large sum, and before the legislature gives up its claim to such an amount the financial effect ought to be well considered.

"That, however, is not all, for the political, even more than the financial, effect should be forecasted. What is proposed is not merely a change in the law, but it is the first step in the way of making great concessions. When conditional purchase was first established, it was fondly believed by those who pinned their faith to the principle, that purchasers would honestly fulfil the conditions, and would never attempt to repudiate their obligations. We have now arrived at a period when they have become numerically strong enough to have some members distinctly representing their class, and other members controlled by them. The first-fruits of this state of things is the proposal to surrender four millions' worth of improvements which it had been bargained the state should receive. In view of this, we may well ask what next? Is concession to stop here? Is it according to human nature that this concession should secure contentment?

Is it according to political experience, that when those who are indebted to the state have got rid of one part of their obligations, they are sure to abstain from trying to get rid of the other part? Who is there can guarantee us that the next claim will not be for the remission of unpaid balances, and that interest already paid shall count as instalments towards the principal? The claim has already been put forward, there are members who advocate it, and if it becomes a popular cry at the next election with a section sufficiently strong to turn the balance at any disputed contest, weak-kneed candidates will succumb. In that case we shall lose, not the value of some promised improvements, but some millions in hard cash—money that was as honestly due to the state as any charge that was ever paid, and money which we have represented to the world as an asset, and on the strength of which, as part of our resources, we have borrowed money. What we have to consider, therefore, is not merely the immediate effect of the proposed change, but the probability there is of other changes following in the direction of further concessions. When the state once begins to waive its rights, where can it call a halt, and where is the assurance that when it does call a halt people would obey?

"If the claim now made could be shown to be a needed concession to persons who had honestly carried out the spirit of the law, there would be something to set up against the danger of the concession itself. If the land were all in the occupation of struggling yeomen, contending with difficulties, and yet resolutely persevering, the state would be entitled to run some risks to help them through. But we know from official statistics that about half the land conditionally pur-

chased has already changed owners, and we know non-officially that a good deal of the balance is destined to change owners as soon as a transfer can be effected. We cannot therefore shut our eyes to the fact that, so far as relates to the greater part of the land thus alienated, the intention of the law has not been, and is not likely to be, carried out; and therefore the greater part of the concession now proposed will not go to *bonâ-fide* settlers, but to the alienees of intermediary speculators. It is said, and doubtless with truth, that there are some *bonâ-fide* settlers, to whom the concession will be a help; but we cannot legislate for them without legislating for all, and we have no means of distinguishing the true selector from the sham one. One member, whose official experience should make him an authority, puts the number of the free-selectors at about 20,000. Another, who is more suspicious, and more exacting in his evidence, puts them at half that number. We have no means of judging between them; but, even taking the larger number to be true, we have to remember that the population of this colony is 650,000, and that in disposing of the public estate we have to consider the interests of the whole, and not merely of those who have been playing the game of grab. Is it not reasonable that, before we surrender the claim of the people to four millions' worth of improvements, and before we make the first big hole in the principle of conditional purchase, the whole adult male population of the colony should have a chance of expressing its opinion?"

Let it be admitted, then, that the Land Alienation Act of 1861 has failed in what it professed to do; that it has failed to effect the settlement of a productive population on the soil; that it is badly administered,

is breeding evils that threaten to retard the progress of the country, is wastful and inefficient,—what proposal do I make? what suggestion? To answer this question, I will venture to take another chapter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Argument continued by illustration and from personal experiences in land settlement—The work of settlement in Oudh—Fixity of tenure and easy conditions—Surveys and improvements—Village settlements—Importation of labour—The labour question—Misstatements and false views—Coolie labour—More labour wanted—Anti-immigrationists—Protectionists in disguise—More abundant labour the talisman of Australia's development—The reign of the carpet-baggers—No progress without population—Words of an Australian poet.

ONCE more let me proceed by way of illustration from my own experiences, they are so far valuable as being at all events suggestive of what might be done in a similar way here. I have already alluded briefly to the working of the Waste Lands Regulations in India. Towards the end of 1875, I undertook the management of several grants held under the Waste Lands Regulations in Oudh and the North-West Provinces. The extent of the grants was 28,000 acres. It was mostly thick forest country, with rather a poor soil, and a not by any means over abundant rainfall. It was in fact not unlike much existing parts of the different Australian colonies. The former management had been content to wait the slow progress of village settlement, with here and there a desultory attempt at forest clearing. By including all the open glades in the forest, the bare upland slopes, the more trampled down

portions of the jungle near the scattered hamlets—for they could not be called villages—the first five years' measurement had been got over, and an eighth of the total area had been reported as having been reclaimed according to the regulations. It now wanted but three years for the next periodic survey, and I had my hands full. My employer, however, was persuaded that it could be done. He reposed a loyal confidence in me, and I was determined to do what I could to deserve it.

The country bore an evil reputation for fever, it was as bad in that respect as New Guinea, and the great difficulty was the want of labour. It was of no use to try to induce settlement on the old system. Tenants would not face the jungle malaria, and settle down even on a nominal rental. My first care, therefore, was to bring with me a crowd of my old coolies from Behar, and, accompained by a number of trusty old servants who rallied to my standard, I set out to brave the fevers and chills of my forest territory.

I had here to face the same problem that even now awaits solution in Australia; and in my limited way I had to solve the knotty difficulty,—how was I to settle and reclaim my domain, and make it productive?

I found the few Ishmaelitish dwellers already in possession of the cleared spaces prepared to meet me with the most determined hostility. They tried to frighten my coolies with terrible stories of the decimating fever. Once they nearly set fire to my bungalow. They invaded my fields at night, and carried off my crops. My cattle were stolen, and my servants beaten. It was a weary time; but temper, and judgment, and tact, began to make progress after a while. When they found that I did not want to raise their rents, or force any particular culture upon them, they gradually,

one by one, came over to my side, although at first they stood aloof, and used my name as a bogey to frighten their children. Many of my coolies deserted—ran away with their advances; others in large numbers knocked under from fever, and I had to send them home.

When I succeeded in getting villagers attracted to settle in my villages, the neighbouring landholders tried their utmost, to bribe them over to their own estates; but backed up by my large-hearted employer, I struggled manfully on. To every resident in my scattered villages I at length succeeded in giving a lease on easy terms; I allowed them advantages and made concessions which they had never before enjoyed. Formerly they were mere tenants at will, and after a generous season the manager would make exactions to secure back-rents. At any moment their cattle might be impounded, or their crops seized. In fact they had no fixity of tenure. All this I altered. It was hard work at first to convince them that I was honest, and would keep my word. Formerly, when a man ran away, a band of armed retainers hunted him from village to village, in the endeavour to harry his cattle, or forcibly compel him to come back. I let them go if so minded, and made no effort to restrain them. Better an empty house than a bad tenant, I thought. I first of all made up each man's account, what he owed to the estate, and any disputed item I submitted to the arbitration of the chief men in their own little "clachan," with a few of my own chief servants. It was a tiresome task, but I succeeded. I got every man to come in and sign a bond for the amount of his indebtedness. I arranged for payment on easy and liberal terms. Where the rent seemed in any way excessive, I reduced it. The neighbouring zemindars

thought me mad. They insisted that I should demoralize their tenantry and raise a revolution. Sure enough I did, and a blessed revolution it was to the poor struggling peasantry. I gave each man a lease, signed, sealed, and registered. Here at last was something tangible. They had never before enjoyed a real fixed tenure. Ah, what a magic is in that! How can you expect a man to improve his holding, when he is liable at any moment to ejection, or to find a higher bidder step over his head?

Another old system I abrogated entirely. It was the custom there to assess the rent on the kind of crop cultivated. Such crops as barley, oil-seeds, or pulse, were grown under a low assessment; tobacco and sugar-cane, or poppy, which are the most valuable crops, were assessed at a much higher figure. I told my assamies or cultivators: "You shall pay me so much per acre, and you can grow what you like." I divided the lands according to quality into three distinct classes—*owel, doem, and sem*, or first, second, and third. The first comprised all the rich lands near the villages, the fat rice swamps, and the loomy sugar-cane fields; the second included the poorer fields, those in which barley and pulse or other inferior grains were grown; and the third comprehended the grazing ground, the relapsed fields, and the *purtee*, or untilled, uncleared wastes. Each man's holding was accurately measured and clearly defined.

What was the natural result? People from neighbouring estates began to come over to survey my operations and spy out the land. My *ryots* by this time were beginning to believe in me. I did not harass them. I lost a good deal of back balance by the thriftless, the lazy, and improvident running away.

I did not worry them, but let them go. The best of their lands I added to the portions of my most industrious tenants, and new tenants were found in time actually to compete for the others. I found in the jungles a wild herd of cattle, numbering nearly 200 head. I had great difficulty at first in getting these branded. The old herdsmen—who had stolen the calves, sold the hides and fattened on the milk—now tried in every way to thwart me. I dismissed them, and imported men of my own to fill their places.

By-and-by I got all the cattle branded. Then I bought a fine half-bred English young bull. I got two or three other native bulls. I divided my cattle into herds. I drafted out the young ones, and broke them in to the plough. When a new cultivator or settler came, I in many cases advanced him a little money, and sold him a couple of young plough bullocks on deferred payments, or lent him a young one of my own on condition that he broke it in for me; and I provided ploughing for them on my own factory lands, the price of the labour to be deducted from the price of the bullocks as forming part payment.

Before settling a village, I first sank a good well, lined it with substantial masonry, and planted bamboos, plantains, and other useful trees, for the first comers. I advanced seed-corn and other seeds; and while strictly just and firm, I never unduly pressed any one, or harassed them by dragging them before the courts, as had been formerly too often the practice. In fact, I reposed a good deal of trust in them, for I believed that confidence begets confidence.

With the aid of my tenants, and with my own paid labourers, I formed roads through the forest to and from the different clearings. I worried the district

officials, till I got the mud track dignified by the name of the government high road, put in repair. I got the rivers and creeks bridged by government, and my ryots before the end of a couple of years could thus, on a good road, transport their produce to Shajehanpore, the nearest large town. At the same time I was willing to purchase from any of them their grain, cane, or other produce, at the ruling market-rates. I was not averse to taking payment of my rents in kind, allowing a fair margin for my own risk and profit.

Meantime I pursued the work of clearing jungle, to carry out the provisions of my tenure, and employed an army of labourers in this work. I let out parts of the jungle to the herds of other villagers, at a cheap grazing rent. The felled timber I leased to charcoal burners, and merchants who carted fuel to distant towns and villages. What I could not sell or use, I burnt. A pretty considerable revenue I thus raised from forest produce; and parts of the jungle I reserved altogether, and would allow no wood to be cut thereon.

As fast as I cleared, my own ploughmen tore up the soil, and I scattered rape, linseed, and various pulses, on the rough ground; I grew rice and grain for the consumption of my own men; and on every acre I cleared, I left about twenty of the best and largest trees. I did not believe in "ring-barking," and denuding the country entirely of timber. Nothing can be more foolish or suicidal than this; and yet it is the general custom in Australia.

By clearing simultaneously at several points, I was better able to judge of my progress, and found the men were roused to a spirit of healthy emulation. I next got authority from my employer to import from

England a portable engine. This I intended to use for irrigation. I had a magnificent water frontage to a small stream, running through the forest, called the *Kutna nuddee*. At intervals of from two to three hundred yards I dug a *pyne*, or deep cutting, into the bank; and along the top of the ridge, whence the land sloped gently down on either side, I formed a main water channel. Into the *pyne* I put a portable pump, to be worked by the engine; and by a system of small runlets I distributed the water over the slopes.

I had now by this time my indigo vats, buildings, and other appliances, ready for use. My crop was sown, and I invited the ryots to grow indigo for me, giving them an agreement that I would pay them for the crop, at a rate estimated on the average value of all their other crops, taking good, bad, and indifferent together. I struck, in fact, an average rate per acre, taking the total produce of each man's cultivation, as the factor. The cultivation was not compulsory. Many of the ryots sowed a small patch the first year, in fear and trembling. When the crop was cut I measured the land, took the average returns of the produce on their other fields, and paid them at that rate for the indigo crop. If any were dissatisfied, the matter was referred to the *Punchayiet* or village council. The only stipulation I made, and it was a fair one, was that I would pay only for plant actually delivered at the factory. The second year, when the ryots found I paid them cash down on delivery, the area of indigo cultivation was more than trebled.

When I went to the jungles, there were no artificers or handicraftsmen in these wild forest solitudes. I accordingly settled blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, brickmakers, and grain sellers and buyers around the

head factory. To each newcomer, if he was a good man, I gave the right to graze a couple of cows rent free, in my forest reserves, and possessed him of a small plot of land, on which he might grow garden produce or a little rice for himself, at a merely nominal rent.

By having accurate measurements of all my lands, by utilization of jungle products, by letting out the fisheries and grazing rights, and, above all, by economical management, and by having really working tenants, paying up their moderate rents, instead of lazy fellows nominally paying a larger rent, but constantly running away without paying anything at all, I was able the first year to show a bigger actually collected rental than my predecessors had ever before been able to remit to the owner.

But all this was not done in a day. My rapid sketch can give no adequate idea of the heart-breaking difficulties I was continually trying to surmount. In wind and storm, in sun and rain, I was out among my labourers, and spent nearly all my time in the forest. I had to fight the fever and the cholera, both plagues having broken out among my workmen more than once. 'Tis true I had glorious shooting, and plenty of sport, but I had no society save when I could get an occasional run into Seetapore or Shajehanpore.

The most rapid glance at what has been written will immediately raise the reflection, "You had surely little to contend with that the settler has to face in Australia. You had labour in abundance, and you had capital to back you up." It was not so. I had to import all my labour. I had to do the same as the sugar growers of Mauritius, the tea planters of Assam, the coffee growers of the Wynaad, or the planters of

Queensland have to do. Everywhere in the thickly populous parts of India, labour recruiting agencies are now established. On a system of advances, the recruiting goes on; and legislation has been provided, by which every care is taken of the labourer, and he can only be engaged for a specified time, and under a contract drawn up to provide for every contingency, and scrupulously protecting him from all oppression and wrong. Why could not some such system, drawing on the over-populated old countries for labour, be inaugurated for Australia? All who are interested in immigration and settlement work, can easily get access to these acts, and acquaint themselves with the lines of the legislation by the Government of India on the subject.

What concerns us here in Australia is the fact that assisted immigration has been worked, and worked successfully, despite all that has been asserted to the contrary. I do not want to flood this country with coloured labour—black, yellow, or coffee coloured—if the will of the nation is against it, and the all powerful *vox populi* cries out that the thing shall not be. But if ever Australia is to be opened out in a manner at all worthy of her natural endowments, we must have more labour, and that labour must not be procurable only at prices that are practically prohibitive. Why do not our workmen ask themselves, Where is the benefit of wages at twenty shillings *per diem*, if the loaf of bread costs half a crown, the pair of boots forty shillings, the good wife's calico gown seven or eight shillings per yard, and everything else in proportion?

Men talk about the hardness of the times; why what are people to do? Suppose a man has made a little

money, for which he has no doubt worked hard enough. Then he buys a bit of land. He finds it will cost him 50*l.* an acre to get it ready for the plough. He could get it done in England for less than one-fourth of that. He wants to build a house. He finds it will cost him a sum so large as to be quite out of all proportion to the result to be achieved. Timber is plentiful, building material handy, but labour is at prohibitive prices, so he will content himself with a "*humpy*," or a rough log-hut roofed with stringy bark.

He might think of taking a servant-man or house-maid. It is a chance if he has not introduced into his service one who thinks the whole duty of life is to do as little work as he can for as much wage as he can get. I know dozens of cases where the mistress of a neat cottage, chooses to do all the house-work herself, rather than put up with the insubordination, laziness, and thoughtlessness, of a female help.

The ridiculous cry against immigration in Australia is got up, not by thinking working-men themselves, but by unthinking spouters and windbags. I asked a man the other day whom I knew to be a good workman and a thinking man, during a noisy debate with one or two of his mates about labour and immigration, "Come, Tom," I asked, "what's your opinion?" "Oh, sir," he replied, "I let's Jim do all the jawin' there; he's more accustomed to it, d'ye see, and *this work's got to be done.*" Now that's just it. The "*jawin'*" lot neglect their work, to seek a royal road to wealth and independence, and the "workin'" lot have to work double tides, to do their own work and that of the "*jawin'*" fraternity besides.

How can a small struggling farmer ever hope to succeed if he has no population to buy his products?

How can he raise those products if he cannot employ labour except at prohibitive rates? How shall a capitalist risk his wealth, the outcome of good sturdy work, and thrift, if his labour is to eat into his capital? And all this, when other countries can supply him with the same article at a lower rate. Men talk of protection. They say encourage native industry by bonuses, by protection, by prohibiting the import of foreign goods. Now if we cannot compete with other nations without protection, we can't compete at all. Protection grows by what it feeds upon. Protect your woollen manufactures, and linen will claim the same right. Protect manufacturing interests, and agriculture will follow suit. Protect flour-mills, and butchers, and grocers will claim it too; where would it stop? The cry of anti-immigration is Protection in its grossest shape.

Work here is lying waiting to be done on every side, crying out for labour. Lands want clearing, farms want tillage, districts want opening up. Timber, valuable timber, is rotting in the bush, because there are not found men to work it up. Minerals and metals lie unused by the ton, because there is no labour to raise them, and bring them to market. Valuable meat is wasted, and cattle are shot and rot on the ground because there are not mouths to eat the food. Our plains are covered with countless flocks. Our seas swarm with multitudes of fish. Our water runs unused and wasted to the sea. With labour, our lands could be irrigated, our wool and our hides manufactured, our fisheries established, our timbers and building materials utilized. Towns and villages would spring up over the length and breadth of the land. Our solitary places would be made glad, and "the

wilderness would rejoice and blossom like the rose." In the face of all this pusillanimous outcry, one might well ask, whether our working-men are descended from the unflinching old Anglo-Saxon race. Do they fear the competition of what they spurn as inferior races! Are they no longer able, by the honest sweat of their brows, and the brave, unflinching strength and labour of their strong right arms to maintain their own?

I have been all through Queensland. You have read, if you have followed me thus far, the account of my visit to the sugar estates on the Mary River. At Yengarrie I saw a sugar refinery, replete with every modern improvement in the mechanical arts. To look at the complicated machinery alone, gave one almost a headache. This one establishment gives employment to a very large staff of overseers, engineers, skilled labourers, clerks, and workmen of various kinds. A large village with a neat school, a comfortable reading-room, and other establishments for the moral and intellectual advancement of the employers, has been raised; and all this has been brought about by the employment of Kanaha cheap labour. Without that, this fine tract of country, these smiling tracts of waving sugar-cane, finding remunerative work for these busy factories, would still have been covered with primeval bush, the haunt of the wallaby and the guana, the pestilent abode of fevers and agues.

Why, there is room here in Australia, not for tens and twenties, but for hundreds and thousands of emigrants. Half a million Kanahas, or Hindoo labourers, or honest, willing, hard-working British workmen could find work here if they were willing; and the men who now wield the pick and shovel, would become overseers, contractors, foremen, and managers, if they were able

to take such places. If not able to oversee the labour of inferior races, they have no business to be anything more than they are at present, "hewers of wood, and drawers of water." They will never rise, and to stop the development of a grand colony for such men is nothing short of monstrous.

Instead of suppressing Kanaha immigration in Queensland, government should actually encourage it. Production would increase, arts spread, agriculture advance, and where one white man now finds employment, thousands would be eagerly sought after, and would find remunerative occupations in the teeming industries that would be inaugurated.

The cry against increased population and abundant labour is but the old howl against machinery. You may remember how the sewing machine was railed at for taking the bread out of the mouths of the poor seamstresses. What family could now do without its sewing machine? Has it not given industry to thousands who could never have made a living with needle and thread but for its help. It has raised up new channels of labour, and done more to raise the condition of industrious young women than twenty thousand labour leagues, anti-emigration societies, and anti-machinery organizations could ever have done.

How on earth are cotton and woollen mills to spring up, when where are none to wear the coats, and shirts, and trousers? How are tanneries to be established when you bar the country against the advance of boot and shoe wearing bipeds? Give us population and abundant labour, and the country cannot fail to become a great productive colony, a grand centre of industrial activity, supporting a contented, prosperous, and progressive population.

If our policy is to be guided only by the passing sensations and cravings of an easily appeased hunger, then by all means let us stick to our anti-immigration theories; let us continue our present land muddle, and throw prudence, forethought, and statesmanship to the winds. In the mad scramble for the plunder of the State's patrimony, let us throw aside all restraint, think no more of posterity, scatter restrictions to the winds. Let it be each man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.

Thank God there are yet some good men left, even in Sodom. The words of the Australian singer can yet raise responsive echoes in the hearts of many of Australia's best sons. Let Henry Halloran speak:—

"Repel them from our shores! Ungenerous thought!
Our friends and brothers in that distant land
Where strength of purpose, skilfulness of hand,
Can hardly bring the toilers bread, or aught
Which, in abundance, here is found if sought.
Here are broad acres open to demand,
With right of choice and means of payment, plann'd
So that the poorest has whate'er he ought.
God! who in very plenteousness hast spread
This goodly continent of sunny wealth—
This Paradise, blue-skyed and golden-stored—
That all Thy children, lacking daily bread,
Should have abundance *here* of food and health—
Shall *we* Thy bounty circumscribe, O Lord?

Come one—come all! for there is room to share
With all who can, in this brave land of ours—
Where the kind earth, with unexhausted powers,
Gives food for toil, and something still to spare.
Our flaccid veins want blood, that we may bear
In flowing tides, thro' near-approaching hours,
Our front of strength wherever danger lours,
And weakness fails, however much it dare.

The motherland may need the growing might
Of brave descendants in this favour'd land
To join her standards and support her right,
And hold unquestion'd still her wide command.
Come one—come all, and make our Future bright,
Co-heirs of Fame, to answer her demand.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Scheme of land reform by "Capricornus"—Commutation of existing rights—Survey before settlement—Demarcation of agricultural and pastoral areas—Land operations in New Zealand—Railways and public works—Imported labour—Fixity of tenure—Employment of capital—Rents and cesses—Title direct from the State—Local Land Boards—A model land tax—Objections—The right of the State to a moiety of the unearned increment—Centralization—A nomadic race the result of the present system—Tenant-right—Low-cost railways—Foreign capital—Inducements to capitalists—Results of a wise and liberal land reform—Conclusion—"ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA."

THE most practical and comprehensive scheme of land reform I have yet seen submitted is that proposed by the writer ("Capricornus") from whose works I have already quoted. The chief features of his plan I now briefly lay before the reader, whom I would refer to Mr. Ranken's published works[1] for fuller details, and I

[1] "Bush Essays." By "Capricornus." Adam and Charles Black, Edin., 1872.

"The Squatting System of Australia." Bell and Bradfute, Edin., 1875.

"Colonization in 1876." Turner and Henderson, Sydney, 1876.

"Homestead Settlement." Turner and Henderson, Sydney, 1877.

"Grazing, Past, Present, and Future." Turner and Henderson, Sydney, 1877.

"The Land Law of the Future." Turner and Henderson, Sydney, 1877.

"Centralization and our Land Reformers" have already appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and are shortly to be published in a separate form.

can promise any one interested in settlement-work and the question of land legislation much valuable information and wise reasoning on the subject. I can only very briefly epitomize the salient features of his proposed reform.

The first great feature would be a commutation of present existing rights of squatter and selector, on an equitable basis which he fully elaborates in his able pamphlet "The Land Law of the Future." The effect of this would be to define rights and bring back under the direct jurisdiction of the state large tracts of country on which future settlement has been made impossible, by reason of the destructive feuds which have arisen under the operation of the Robertsonian system. The disorder and the process of cure are both fully gone into by our author. The future allocation of land is provided for by a system of preliminary survey, under which grazing and agricultural farms, with villages and commonages, public reserves, forests and mineral tracts are defined and placed under local land boards. The unalienated grazing land remains in the hands of the land board, but is rented only under a half-yearly licence, and is brought into the market as population spreads. The fiscal results, as shown by "Capricornus," would produce a permanent land revenue, immensely greater than the present squatting land revenue, and nearly equal to that which is now being produced by the irrational and reckless sacrifice of the public estate pursued under the present suicidal plan.

The general result would be that both squatter and selector would be better off than they were before, while three-fourths of the squatting country, being liberated from the action of the present destructive

law, would be open for future settlement, and held in trust in the interest of colonization.

Making allowance for reassessment, at stated periods, Mr. Ranken's plan is on the whole one that commends itself to my judgment. Mr. Ranken's commutation scheme would in fact amount to something very nearly approaching the best features of the permanent settlement of Cornwallis.

Some such scheme as this, to my mind, presents the only fair and equitable method of reconciling the present ruinously conflicting interests, and bringing peace and progress to the distracted country.

The country intended for settlement should first of all be accurately surveyed and its capabilities intelligently ascertained. Agricultural and pastoral areas should be marked out, and capital should be invited to take up land and aid in the work of settlement. Extensive reserves should be set apart for forests, for commonages, public grazing-grounds, public works, and mineral industries. The management of a private estate should in fact be applied in the disposition of the public estate.

Let us suppose, for instance, the American plan of railway grants to be in vogue here. There would be no difficulty in getting the necessary capital. The British investor would rather lend money to his own kith and kin than to repudiating Turks and Pagans. Twenty millions could be raised without difficulty to work such a company as the Indo-Austral trading company, I imagine, or a guaranteed land and railway company, such as we see in New Zealand and elsewhere. Already in Queensland an enterprising junto of far-seeing and energetic men have accomplished by private effort what the government might have only begun to

think about some generations hence. They have completed a private survey for a line of railway from the Pacific to Port Darwin. If the right of construction with grants of land along the proposed route were given them, who can doubt but that this enterprise would do more to develope Queensland than all the money spent in immigration and public works have done since Captain Cook landed at Botany Bay?

What has been done in New Zealand, in America, in Canada, in Belgium, in India, in Egypt, could surely be done here. From the chairman's speech at the first meeting of shareholders of the New Zealand Agricultural Company I extract the following passage, which foreshadows what might be done under liberal land legislation here:—

"The company had nearly 200 shareholders. The number of shares disposed of, including the fully-paid shares, transferable only in the colony, allotted to the vendors as part payment, was 27,233, amounting to 544,660*l*. Of this amount 398,665*l*. was paid up. It followed that more than half of the share capital was subscribed, and the debenture holders had a security over the property of more than 2*l*. to 1*l*. It had been resolved to offer 3000 shares for sale in India, it having been represented to the directors that there was a great desire amongst Indian officers and planters to become connected with New Zealand with the view of ultimately settling there. The lands of the company would command so ready a sale, so far as they could be subdivided and put into the market, that debenture money would stand in the place of share capital, as far as it might be considered desirable. He need scarcely tell them they would not sell any land without a large profit, and many and vast had been the fortunes made in the

colonies by "cutting up." The man with small means tried it with small pieces of land, the man of large means with large estates; and in each case the profits were enormous. "Cutting up" meant acquiring land wholesale and selling it retail. As settlements extended, as towns grew up, the increase in the value of land was very large. He might give them an example. A few days since they had information of the sale of the Totara block in the Oamaru district. Unimproved land in this district realized from 20*l.* to 30*l.* an acre. A few years since it was sold by the government at 1*l.* or 2*l.* an acre. Their land was as good as this land, and was as near to the capital town, Dunedin. And they had a further advantage in position, as this company's lands were so situated as to command with equal facility the markets of Dunedin and Invercargill, the capital towns of Otago and Southland, as well as the goldfields districts. They proposed to give to purchasers easy terms of payment, and they should assist settlers in various ways. Skilled advice would be at their command; they would be able to obtain advances on their crops; the company would act as their agents for the sale of produce, and might allow them on terms to run cattle on the leasehold lands of the company. He should like to call special notice to their intention to offer some of their lands for sale in this country. They proposed to reserve special blocks for that purpose, which would be offered upon terms exceptionally favourable to the settler. They thought it of the first importance to induce the settlement of practical farmers from this country upon the company's lands. They had reason to believe that, owing to the present condition of the agricultural interests at home, many men possessed of experience and moderate capital

would be found to prefer freehold lands in the colonies to leaseholds at home, more particularly when they found even much less capital was required in the former than in the latter position. The company would cultivate as much of its land as might be found desirable on its own account, and carry on also the business of sheep farming. The breeding of high-class stock would also be a branch of the company's operations. The proposal to take cadets seemed a very popular feature. They had already arranged with several cadets at premiums of 300 guineas, and were in negotiation with others; and the company would also act as agents for the sale of properties, as also agents for absentees. When their land became covered with settlements, farms, and towns, it would be difficult to be too sanguine as to the value of their shares in years to come."

What a private company is doing in New Zealand government could easily do here. Capitalists, under a system of grants, could be induced to employ their energies in the same direction in Australia.

Under a system assimilating in character to that at work in the northern parts of India, the waste land could be given out on an improving tenure. The government lease would convey an indisputable right to the soil, negotiable, vendible, and transferable, burdened only with the contribution to the state of the land revenue cess, which at first infinitesimal, or even dormant, would be elastic and expand as value increased. Under a proper classification lands would be assessed in proportion to their productiveness.

Pastoral lands would contribute a merely nominal rent at first, determined by demand for pasture, price of stock, contiguity to market, water, and other modi-

fying circumstances. The first settlement should err rather on the side of leniency. Yet under a fixed tenure, the improvement of runs, such as the laying down of foreign grasses, fencing, conservation of water, road-making and clearing, would proceed with such vigour that the nominal rent of even, say, one penny to sixpence per acre, while it would bring in a much larger revenue than even the forced sale of lands now brings in, would never be felt by the pastoral tenants. Along the lines of railways which, by the guaranteed employment of capital, would reticulate the country as with a vast net, manufacturing villages and mining towns would spring up as swiftly and vigorously as ever they did in America's palmiest days. Along the coasts, as the timber-getters retired deeper and deeper into the forests, the sturdy ploughman would furrow up the soil, as is even now being done in Canada, and fishing and agricultural villages would nestle beneath every sheltering bluff and headland.

Under proper restrictions, such as have been found to work well elsewhere, the millions of India, if the Chinese are objected to, might send their quota of busy pioneers to construct railways, reservoirs, embankments, and roads. Everywhere in their wake would flock the struggling yeomen and toiling hinds of England, panting for a free and plenteous land, where they would enjoy the fruits of their labours, still under the welcome shadow of the British flag, surrounded by brethren, akin in blood, religion, speech, and laws, with patient and intelligent fellow-subjects doing all the preliminary rough work for them. They would still preserve their heritage in the glorious annals of our tight little island, and though dwelling in the

Antipodes, would retain the traditions, the historical associations, the Constitution of the older England.

Under the new *régime* let us imagine a district surveyed in course of such a settlement as has been indicated. Existing interests have been commuted and consolidated, and the exact title of each settler to the land he occupies is finally determined. The rent he is to pay to government has been equitably ascertained, and reasonably apportioned; and its incidence is felt as no more than a spur to the settler to make the most of his land, and apply his labour and capital as efficiently as he can to its development. Whatever outlay he now incurs is to be for his own future benefit, and for those who succeed him, and is not hanging in the precarious balance of party favour, or at the mercy of every ragged selector who may levy black mail, under threat of an application to the Lands Department for a conditional purchase right. A road cess of perhaps a farthing an acre is being raised, and all the local funds are spent in the district in which they are collected, under the administration of the Local Land Board, or County Roads Trust. This is composed of men who know the wants of the district, and who look on their position as the highest award they can get from their fellows for their public spirit and the coveted recompense for independence, integrity, and zeal for the public service. Not merely the guerdon for unlimited brass—lavish promise, and reckless bidding for popularity, as is too often the case now.

An education cess would be likewise levied and administered, and beyond these no further taxes of any sort would be necessary, unless, maybe, a moderate customs tariff, to reach the mercantile and purely

commercial classes. All else would easily and naturally spring from an elastic, ever-increasing, perpetual land revenue.

An equitable system of settlement, under which each title would be granted direct from the state, subject to a periodic rearrangement of the tribute, derivable from the unearned increment of the land, would tend to reconcile all the present conflicting interests, and make it the object of the land-holder to improve his holding to the utmost limit. Having fixity of tenure, the small farmer knows what he is doing. His little capital is not dissipated or absorbed in the payment of a lump sum of purchase-money, half of which may possibly be raised under a ruinous mortgage. On an improving lease he might be allowed, as, say, waste lands tenants in Oudh were allowed, to cultivate rent free for the first two or three years. His improvements would be sufficient security to the state, and a guarantee for his perseverance. Rules could easily be formulated, under which he would have to bring so much land under reclamation within a certain time, the penalty to be resumption. The Local Land Board would act in much the same way as the collector or deputy-commissioner in India. Local government would see that rules were kept. There would be a constant, intelligent, yet kindly supervision—culture would be applied as best suited the requirements of the country. When a tenant had worked up to the terms of his grant or contract, he might be allowed an area equal to that he had reclaimed, or more if necessary, to be held on a small grazing rental, and in this way pastoral and agricultural settlement might go hand in hand where the country was suitable.

All the present objectionable features of our land

system would be done away with. To recapitulate shortly, the land would be accurately measured, classified according to quality, productiveness, position, &c. During the settlement the local land office, or revenue court, would be open to receive all objections. These would be carefully considered, and the local officers being acquainted practically with the bearings of each case, any malfeasance or miscarriage of justice would be impossible under righteous administration. Appeal might be allowed in certain cases to the head board of revenue in Sydney. The land would yield, from a rental ranging from a penny to a shilling an acre, a greater revenue than is now received from all the forced sales and suicidal alienation that is going on. Here would be indeed a model land tax, moderate in its incidence, and harmless in its operation. It would be at once the fairest and most far-reaching system of raising a revenue. It would press lightly on the poor. It would make the revenue elastic, as the coffers of the State would participate in the advancing wealth and prosperity of the country. Under a proper system of registration, well organized and righteously administered, it would be inoffensive in its operation, and inexpensive in its collection.

It is constantly objected, to the advocates of a permanent land tax, that land is so difficult to clear here. The expense of bringing it under cultivation is so enormous that it is altogether a different problem to solve from any in India, where the soil is made productive with little trouble or preparation, and where, moreover, labour is so plentiful. Men say that if after all our trouble and expense here, we are still to be saddled with a land tax, we had better not clear the land at all. Is no return, then, to be made to the

State for protection, laws, and peaceful occupation? At first the tax need only be proportionate to the value of the land. At the most it would only bear an infinitesimal proportion to the real value of the annual produce, but this grand principle should never be lost sight of in any system of settlement, and should form a *sine quâ non* in any future legislation on the subject, namely, the inalienable right of the State to a share of the unearned increment of the land; and the liability of the land to contribute a just portion thereof in perpetuity, but liable to preconcerted periodic re-arrangements.

Under the present system every man's hand is against his neighbours. A gambling spirit pervades all classes. Men trust to succeed by swindling combinations, by lucky ventures, by audacious speculations and fraudulent insolvencies, rather than by effort and thrift. There is a great tendency to multiply shops and stores, and to float bubble companies, and it is the aim of most workmen to leave manual labour and become petty traders. Hence the multiplication of middle men of all kinds. One great ambition of the restless tradesman is to become a publican, or jobbing speculator; and so hard, productive work is neglected, and the whole community is penetrated by an uneasy desire for swift fortune and rapid acquisition.

There is, again, a prevalent tendency, very much to be deplored, to centralize in the towns. There is even an increasing agglomeration of the masses in the great centres of population. There is really no rural population worthy the name in the colony. Men would rather speculate in land than cultivate it, and the mighty danger of large estates, of the accumulation of the land into few hands, daily looms nearer and nearer,

and becomes more menacing. By our "tenant-right" tenure we would give to all comers, the proletariate included, a stake in the country. The workmen in the towns—the merchant, the trader, the shopkeeper, could each send his son to cultivate his little farm, and abundant labour would be procurable under a proper system of imported fellow-subjects to enable him to comply with every condition, with the certainty of a remunerative result to all concerned.

As it now is, we have a vast, ever-increasing class springing up with no stake in the country at all; a nomadic Ishmaelitish race, with no fixed residence, no fixed aim, thriftless, discontented, ill-educated, self-indulgent. Every man in this disorganized growing rabble has his vote. Herein lies the germ of future troubles. A proletariate is growing up, having no stake in the permanent welfare and progress of the colony—congregating in the large towns—having an uncertain livelihood. What are we to do with them? They cannot purchase land under the present Act. They are barred by the residence, improvement, and purchase clauses, and by the scarcity of labour, from tackling agriculture with any degree of success. What, then, is to be done?

Would it not be well, side by side with our settlement, and bestowal of tenant-right titles, on such as wished them, to try also the American plan of inviting foreign capital in the prosecution of public works—giving grants of land, subject to the land cess, in return, and let public companies do for us what they have done, and are doing, for Russia, England, France, America, Belgium, Egypt, India, and all the sensible countries that have invited the aid of the capitalist and engineer.

I would have low cost railways made by British capital, extending over the face of the country, wherever there was good land. I would in return for the construction of the lines and public works, make over blocks of land, say, alternate blocks of ten miles square to the companies, under similar, though perhaps easier, rules as to settlement and payment of revenue, as the ordinary settlement of the country. I would, under a proper system of careful immigration enactments, allow the companies to import abundant coolie or other labour—found villages and towns. And by opening out and preparing the country, attract hither the hosts of half-starved, poorly paid artisans, mill workers, and labouring hinds, from the overcrowded old country. If it be objected that these are not the men we want in a new land of promise such as ours, I would ask would not the stalwart navvy, the intelligent mill-worker, ay, even the industrious, tractable, patient Hindoo, be better as a legitimate State investment, than the present nomadic, half-educated, semi-civilized Ishmaelites, who live by levying black mail from their richer neighbours, who swell the ranks of the dissolute and criminal.

Give charters to capitalists; grants of land under condition of the State sharing in the enhanced value of the estate; a permanent settlement to present owners founded on a wise and equitable principle of commutation. Map out your country into areas fit for settlement. Give leases in the pastoral tracts with fixity of tenure, and a fair assessment of rent. Establish your local Boards; assist immigration; open out public works of all sorts by foreign capital, and with State guarantees; settle your farmers on the soil, and give them their tenant right; assist them with ad-

vances, if need be, from a national agricultural bank, advances to be made under sanction of the local Board, resumption of improvements as security. And then, indeed, Australia might become the paradise of the willing pioneer; the land of promise to the down-trodden, struggling, yet hopeful, self-reliant worker. Then, indeed, would a nation of sturdy yeomen spring to life under the glittering splendour of the Australian sun, and the place of the dummy, the truculent selector, the scheming squatter and perjured politician, would know them no more.

After the first ten years of such a settlement as we have imperfectly tried to suggest, we come back to look on the results. What a change has come over the once arid wilderness of grass and scrub and solitary tangled bush! Capital and labour have metamorphosed the country. Populous towns and smiling villages dot the land. Fenced fields stretch in unbroken leagues, covered with waving crops; and ever-fresh experiments in the government and corporate farms are opening out new industries, and acclimatizing new products every day. The old feud between squatter and selector has died out, and the herds of the former browse peacefully on the uplands, or fatten in the well-watered, well-grassed paddocks, while the curling smoke from countless homesteads curls peacefully into the crisp, still atmosphere, speaking of prosperity and rural content. The farmer and the trader cultivate friendly relations, and commerce and agriculture go hand in hand. Factory chimneys now pierce the sky in every district, and the towns are resonant with the clang and rattle of machinery, giving employment to hosts of hardy operatives, and transforming the raw products of the land into all the countless creations of

ingenuity and skill. The country is covered with a network of roads, canals, and railways. Coal, iron, copper, and other mines are being developed. On the slopes of the distant hills young plantations of olives, cork-trees, teak, mahogany, box, mulberry, and other hard woods, fruit-trees, and commercially valuable timbers are struggling vigorously into life. Potteries, tanneries, oil, sugar, and paper mills, tea gardens, coffee, cinchona, and indigo plantations are springing up in every suitable locality. The people—educated into a sense of their responsibilities, and enjoying all the glories and liberty of the British constitution, with an elastic revenue, laws wisely administered, and represented in the councils of the nation by the wisest, most unselfish, and patriotic men in the community, cemented to India and the other parts of the empire by a community of interests, laws, and loyal fealty to Great Britain—are fast taking their place in the van of the rising nations of the earth. Over mountain and sea, from teeming wave and fertile plain, from millions of contented peasantry, comfortable operatives, prosperous farmers and settlers, ascends the prayer that is its own answer, by living hope, and the prophecy that is its own fulfilment, by effort and self-reliance—*Advance, Australia.*

APPENDIX I.

Note A, Page 65.

As a corollary to my remarks on the treatment of the aborigines, I have extracted the following letter which appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* shortly after my chapter was written. It needs no comment. The case is not overstated:—

The Condition of the Aborigines.

To the Editor of the Herald.

Sir,—Will you kindly allow me a little space in your columns to bring before the attention of the public of this colony the deplorable condition of the remnants of the aboriginal race, and the necessity of something being done speedily in the direction of ameliorating that condition? Stationed as I am in the far interior, I can speak from personal observation of the wants and woes of the poor unfortunate blacks.

Even as regards their temporal condition, theirs is a most wretched existence. I have recently visited some of their camps on the Murrumbidgee, and found black women and numbers of their half-caste children in a state of the most melancholy destitution, deserted by the male members of the tribe—for I find that when the black girls are ruined by white men (so called) they are then as a rule left to their own dread resources—without food, and nearly naked, not having even a single blanket to cover them at night. And these miserable creatures I found were at the mercy of every white scamp and vagabond; and what, I ask,

is the consequence? The uprising of a race of wild half-castes in the very midst of a Christian community. And, sir, I speak within bounds when I say there are hundreds of these young half-castes on the creeks and rivers of Riverina, running as wild as the emu and kangaroo, with no idea of anything above or beyond themselves and their immediate surroundings.

> "Like brutes they live,
> And like brutes they must die,"

unless rescued by true Christian charity.

With respect to their moral state, need I state it is simply one of chaotic darkness, and hitherto little or nothing has been done to enlighten them. With all our loud professions of Christian charity, and with our manifold missionary enterprises to enlighten and elevate the dark and degraded heathen far away, there is a standing reproach at our very doors—absolute neglect of the heathen in our midst.

I should like to know the reason why more has not been done, either by the Churches or Government of this colony, to ameliorate the condition of the blacks. In several of the sister colonies vigorous efforts are being put forth in this direction, and these efforts are already crowned with much success. In Victoria alone, where they have not as many hundreds of blacks as we have thousands, there are no less than six stations in full operation, while here there is not a single Church or Government institution. Why this unexplainable contrast? Is it not as much our duty to "rescue the perishing and care for the dying" aborigines, as the duty of our neighbours across the border? I maintain that it is. And if these unfortunate beings are allowed to continue, as they now are, in physical wretchedness, and "no man caring for their souls," it will be to us as a Christian colony a crying disgrace.

In conclusion, may I express the hope that through proper influence being brought to bear upon the Government this question may soon be taken up, and successfully dealt with.

I am, yours truly,

JOHN B. GRIBBLE, Independent Minister.

Jerilderie, Riverina, June 5.

APPENDIX II.

Note B, Page 262.

The following is a complete list—as far as I have been able to gather—of all the newspapers published in Queensland and New South Wales :—

NEW SOUTH WALES.

SYDNEY	Morning Herald, daily
,,	Telegraph, daily
,,	Mail, weekly
,,	Evening News, daily
,,	Town & Country Journal, weekly
,,	Echo, daily
,,	Journal of Commerce, weekly
SYDNEY	Punch, weekly
,,	Illustrated News, monthly
,,	Protestant Standard, weekly
,,	Churchman, weekly
,,	Agricultural Journal, monthly
,,	Freeman's Journal, weekly
,,	Catholic Times, weekly

Albury	Border Post, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Banner, Sat.
Armidale	Express, Fri.
Barwon	Argus, Thurs.
Bathurst	Free Press, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Times, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Independent, Tues., Thurs., & Sat.
,,	Sentinel, Sat.
,,	Record, fortnightly
Balranald	Recorder, Sat.
Bega	Gazette, Mon. and Thurs.
,,	Standard, Sat.
Blayney	Advocate
Bombala	Times, Sat.
,,	Herald, Sat.
Bourke	Cent. Aus. and B. Telegraph, Sat.
Braidwood	Dispatch, Wed. and Sat.
Burrowa	News, Sat.
Carcoar	Chronicle, Sat.
Casino	Richmond River Express, Sat.
Cooma	Monaro Mercury, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Express, Sat.
Coonamble	Independent, Sat.
Coonabarabran, Bligh Watchman.	
Cootamundra Herald, Sat.	
Corowa	Free Press, Tues. and Sat.
Deniliquin	Pastoral Times, Sat.
,,	Riverine Advertiser, Wed.
,,	Chronicle, Thurs.
Dubbo	Dispatch. Fri.
,,	Express, Wed and Sat.

Forbes	Times, Sat.
,,	Gazette, Fri.
Glen Innes	Examiner, Tues.
,,	Guardian, Sat.
Goulburn	Herald, Mon., Wed., and Sat.
,,	Argus, Tues., Thurs., and Sat.
,,	Evening Post, Tues., Thurs., and Sat.
Grenfield	Mining Record, Sat.
Grafton	Observer, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Examiner, Tues. and Sat.
,,	Argus, Mon. and Fri.
Gulgong	Advocate, Wed. and Sat.
Gunning	Leader, Fri.
Gundagai	Times, Tues and Fri.
Hay	Standard, Wed.
,,	Riverino Grazier, Wed.
Inverell	Herald, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Times, Wed. and Sat.
Jerildebie	Gazette, Sat.
Kempsey	Macleay Herald, Sat.
,,	Macleay Chronicle, Thurs.
Kiama	Independent, Tues. and Fri.
,,	Reporter, Wed.
,,	Oddfellow, monthly
Lismore	Star, Sat.
Lithgow	Mercury, Sat.
Maitland	Mercury, Tues., Thurs., & Sat.
,,	Advertising Medium, Wed.
Molong	Express, Fri.
Moama	Riverino Herald, Tues, Thurs. and Sat.
Moruya	Examiner, Sat.
Mossvale	Scrutineer, Thurs.

Mudgee	Western Post, Tues. and Fri.
,,	Independent, Wed. and Sat.
Murrurundi	Times, Sat.
Newcastle	Herald, daily
,,	Pilot daily
Namoi	Independent, Thurs.
Narrabri	Herald, Fri.
Orange	Liberal, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Advocate, Wed. and Sat.
Parramatta	Cumberland Mercury, Sat.
,,	Cumberland Times, Sat.
Queanbeyan, Age, Wed. and Sat.	
Rocky Mouth, Lower Clarence Advocate, Fri.	
Shoalhaven	News, Sat.
,,	Telegraph, Thurs.
Singleton	Argus, Wed. and Sat.
Tamworth	News, Tues. and Fri.
,,	Observer, Sat.
Taree	Manning Times, Sat.
Taree	Manning Advertiser, Thurs.
Tenterfield	Star, Fri.
,,	Independent, Wed. and Sat.
Tumut and Adelong Times, Thurs. and Sat.	
Ulladulla and Milton Times, Fri.	
Uralla and Walcha Times, Sat.	
Wagga Wagga	Express, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Advertiser, Wed. and Sat.
Wellington	Gazette, Thurs.
Wilcannia	Times, Sat.
Windsor	Australian, Sat.
Wollongong	Illawarra Mercury, Tues. and Fri.
,,	Illawarra Argus, Thurs.
Yass	Courier, Tues. and Fri.
,,	Tribune
Young	Burrangong Argus, Wed. and Sat.
,,	Burrangong Chronicle, Wed. and Sat.

QUEENSLAND.

Brisbane	Courier
,,	Queenslander
,,	Monthly Journal of Commerce
,,	Telegraph
,,	Mail, Sat.
Bowen	Port Denison Times
Cairns	Advertiser
Clermont	Peak Downs Telegram
Dalby	Herald
Gympie	Times
Ipswich	Queensland Times
,,	Observer
Mackay	Herald
,,	Mercury
Maryborough	Chronicle
Maryborough	Wide Bay and Burnett News
,,	Mail
Mount Perry	Mail
Ravenswood	Miner
Rockhampton	Argus
,,	Bulletin
Roma	Western Star
Stanthorpe	Border Post and Miner
Toowoomba	Chronicle
,,	Darling Downs Gazette
Townsville	Cleveland Bay Herald
,,	Herald
Warwick	Argus
,,	Examiner

APPENDIX III.

NOTE C, PAGE 273.

AGREEMENT FOR 1874, BETWEEN THE ASSOCIATED COLLIERY MASTERS AND THE OFFICERS AND DELEGATES OF THE COAL-MINERS' ASSOCIATION OF THE H. R. DISTRICT.

AT the request of the Delegates of the Miners' Association we have much pleasure in again publishing the following agreement, with the additional clauses thereto :—

Whereas, on divers occasions since the 23rd day of July, 1872, the proprietors or representatives of the A. A. Company, Wallsend, Waratah, New Lambton, and Co-operative Colleries, hereinafter styled the Associated Masters, have either directly or through the officers and delegates of the Coalminers' Association of the Hunter River District, entered into various agreements with the miners employed at said collieries, with respect to the wages to be paid for hewing coal and other work usually done and performed by the miners, the hours of labour to be observed at the said collieries, and the mode of settling any disputes that may arise in reference thereto. And whereas it is deemed expedient that these said several agreements, copies of which are hereunto annexed, should be remodelled and embodied in one general agreement. Now, therefore, it is hereby mutually agreed and declared by the Associated Masters of the one part, and the Officers and Delegates of the Coalminers' Association of the Hunter River District of the other part. 1st. That the minimum rates of wages payable for hewing and all other work usually performed by miners at each of the above-named collieries, shall be the rates current thereat prior to the 22nd day of July, 1872, when the selling price of round or best coal was 8*s.* per ton, and of small coal 3*s.* 6*d.* per ton. 2nd. That, subject to the above

limit, the wages payable at each of the said collieries for hewing and all other work usually performed by the miners, shall be regulated by the price of coal, and rise and fall with it. 3rd. That the following shall be the scale on which the wages shall rise and fall, viz.: A. Hewing, by the ton, 3*d.* for every 1*s.* of the selling price of coal. B. Yard work, 3*d.* per yard for every 1*s.* of the selling price of coal, in the case of the maximum rate paid for headings, and a proportionate sum in the case of other yard work for which lower rates are paid. C. Filling small coal, either in places wrought by the yard or in the wide places, 1*d.* per ton for every 1*s.* of the selling price of small coal. 4th. That at least a fortnight's notice shall be given by the Associated Masters of their intention to reduce the price of coal. 5th. That in the event of any difference of opinion arising as to the necessity of such reduction in the price of coal, the question shall be settled by conference or arbitration, in pursuance of the clauses for that purpose hereinafter contained. 6th. That the hours of labour to be observed at the said collieries shall be 10½ for the year 1873, and 10 for the year of 1874, including in each case an hour for meals. 7th. That all doubts, differences, or disputes whatsoever that may arise at any time hereafter between any of the parties to this agreement, shall be settled by conference or arbitration in manner following, that is to say: When and so often as any doubt, difference, or dispute shall arise, the dissatisfied party may demand a conference, at which the miners shall be represented by the district officers and delegates of the Coalminers' Association, and the associated masters by any number of persons not exceeding one from each colliery, and the manager of each of the said collieries, who shall meet not later than twenty-eight days from the date of such demand, for the purpose of discussing the matter in dispute, with the view to an amicable settlement; and, in the event of no amicable settlement being arrived at by such conference, then and in that case, the matter in dispute shall be reduced to writing, and submitted to a council of arbitration, to be constituted as follows:—The council of arbitration shall consist of four disinterested persons and an umpire. Each party to this agreement shall appoint two arbitrators, who shall appoint an umpire, conjointly in writing, before they enter upon any matter referred to them, who shall decide on all points on which they

may differ, and whose decision shall be final; and, in default of such appointment by either of the parties hereto, the Minister for Lands for the time being may appoint the arbitrators and the umpire in the event of the arbitrators being unable to agree.

The council of arbitration shall meet not later than fourteen days from the date of any conference failing to settle any matter in dispute, unless the time be extended by mutual agreement. The council of arbitration having met, each party shall have the privilege of being represented by not more than nine representatives, for the purpose of giving evidence and arguing the matter in dispute before such Council of Arbitration. Any dispute having been settled by the Council of Arbitration, shall not again be revived by either party within a period of twelve months from the date of such decision. If, at any time, during the settling of such arbitration any arbitrator die or become incapable to act, the party by whom such arbitrator was appointed shall appoint some other to act in his place within seven days after notice in writing from the other party for such purpose; and, if they fail to do so, the remaining arbitrators may proceed to hear and determine the matter in dispute, and in such case the award of such arbitration shall be final. The cost of any Council of Arbitration shall be defrayed by each party paying their own arbitrators, and the umpire to be paid conjointly. The secretaries to each party shall conjointly arrange the time and place for all meetings relating to this agreement. This agreement shall be in force until the 31st December next ensuing, and thereafter from year to year, unless, on or before the 30th September in any year, notice shall have been given of its discontinuance on the 31st December then following.

Signed by the
ASSOCIATED MASTERS AND THE OFFICERS AND DELEGATES OF THE MINERS' ASSOCIATION.

ADDITIONAL CLAUSES TO THE AGREEMENT OF 1873, BETWEEN THE ASSOCIATED COLLIERY MASTERS AND MINERS' UNION.

Present:—On behalf of the Masters: Messrs. Merewether, A. Brown, jun., Winship, Neilson, Moody, Fletcher, and Thomas. On behalf of the Coal Miners' Association: Messrs. W. Davies (chairman), J. Wood (secretary), and E. Davies (treasurer).

The conference was held for the purpose of framing an additional article to the General Agreement of the 1st December, 1873, defining the deficient work for which the miners shall be entitled to claim consideration, and also providing for the more speedy settlement of disputes arising out of such claims.

After a full and careful consideration of these questions, it was resolved that, in the opinion of the Conference, the following regulations would meet the requirements of the case, and that they be submitted to the Associated Masters and the Coal Miners' Association for approval and confirmation; which was agreed to on the 21st of June, 1875, viz.:—

"1st. Consideration to be paid for stone or roof coming down—extraordinary.

"2nd. Consideration to be paid for crossing faults.

"3rd. Water to be taken out as per A. A. Company's local rule, No. 8; if not consideration, to be paid.

"4th. Consideration to be paid for an unusual quantity of water coming from roof.

"5th. Cutting sumps to be paid for when sunk by miners, by order of manager, overseer, or deputy.

"6th. Consideration to be paid for soft or tender coal in close proximity to faults and tender coal (extraordinary) in other places.

"7th. Consideration to be paid for sets of timber, when prepared and set up by miners, by order of manager, overseer, or deputy. And

"8th. That all disputes arising out of any of the above matters be settled by local arbitration—such arbitration to consist of two persons appointed by the owner or manager, and two persons appointed by the workmen at the colliery where such dispute should occur. In the event of the arbitrators not agreeing, they shall appoint an umpire, whose decision shall be final."

EDWARD C. MERRYWETHER, Chairman,
(On behalf of the Associated Masters).

JOHN WOOD, Secretary,
WILLIAM DAVIES, Chairman,
ENOCH DAVIES, Treasurer,
(On behalf of the Associated Miners).

APPENDIX IV.

NOTE D, PAGE 333.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

ANNO QUADRAGESIMO SECUNDO VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

No. X.

An Act to secure the Protection of certain Birds and Animals.

[Assented to 12th March, 1879.]

WHEREAS it is expedient to encourage the importation and breeding of game not indigenous to the Colony of New South Wales, and also to prevent the destruction of native game during the breeding season. Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of New South Wales in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows :—

1. The words, "imported game," shall mean and include the animals mentioned in the first schedule, and the words, "native game," shall mean and include the animals mentioned in the second schedule to this Act, and the eggs and progeny of any such game respectively.

2. If any person shall wilfully shoot, capture, kill, take, or destroy any native game or imported game, at any time between the 1st day of August and 20th day of February next following, or shall use any means whatever within the same period for the purpose of capturing, killing, or destroying any such game, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 2*l.*

3. No description of fire-arms shall be used for the purpose of

shooting any of the game mentioned in either of the schedules hereto having a greater length of barrel than six feet, or with the bore exceeding one inch in diameter. And no fire-arms of any description, intended to be used for such purpose, having the barrel or bore exceeding such dimensions, shall be affixed to boats, punts, or floating vessels of any kind during any period of the year. Nor shall the charge, when loaded, exceed four drachm of gunpowder and three ounces of shot. And any person offending against the provisions of this section shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 10*l.*

4. Any animals known to be destroyers of snakes, vermin, or insects which are injurious to vegetation, may, by the authority of the Colonial Secretary, by a notice published in the *Gazette* at any time, be added to the lists of animals set forth in the first or second schedule; and after publication of such notice all the provisions of this Act (so far as they may be applicable) shall be held to apply to the animals therein mentioned. Provided that the Colonial Secretary may, by like proclamation, withdraw any such animal from the schedules.

5. If any person, within the period stated in the second section, shall buy, sell, or knowingly have in his possession, or under his control, any dead game, whether native or imported, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.*, unless it can be proved, to the satisfaction of the justices hearing the case, that such dead game were imported from any neighbouring colony; and the burthen of such proof shall rest with the accused.

6. Whenever any sheet of water, island, or enclosed land has been dedicated to the public, or otherwise set apart by the Government or any private person, for preserving any of the animals mentioned in either schedules, the Colonial Secretary may declare, by notice published in the *Gazette*, such dedication or setting apart and the names of the animals intended to be preserved; and thereafter any person taking or killing, or otherwise destroying any such animals therein shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding 5*l.* Provided that the Colonial Secretary may, by a like notice, cancel any dedication or setting apart as aforesaid.

7. All penalties imposed by this Act, or sums of money made payable thereunder, may be recovered before any two justices in

a summary way. Provided that the provisions of this Act relating to native game shall not extend to any aboriginal native, nor (as regards animals included in the second schedule) to any person authorized by the Colonial Secretary to collect specimens of natural history for any public museum.

8. Every person feeling aggrieved by any conviction or order under this Act may appeal against the same in the manner provided by the Act passed in the fifth year of King William IV. numbered twenty-two, as the same is enforced or amended by the Act passed in the thirty-ninth year of her Majesty, numbered thirty-three.

9. This Act may be cited for all purposes as the "Animals Protection Act of 1879."

Schedules.

The First Schedule.

Imported Game.

Value or sum to be paid.

For every Pheasant	£5	For every White Swan . . .	£5
„ Partridge	5	„ Deer	15
„ Californian Quail . .	5	„ Antelope	15
„ Grouse	5		

For each of the progeny of such animals £2

The Second Schedule.

Native Game.

Wild duck of any species.	Great kingfisher or laughing jackass.
Teal, widgeon, coot.	Common shore gull.
Emu.	Black-breasted gull.
Gigantic crane or native companion.	Tern or sea swallow.
Bustard or wild turkey.	White-breasted oyster-catcher.
Black swan.	Sooty oyster-catcher.
Wild goose of any species.	Lyre-bird.
Bronze-wing or other indigenous pigeon.	Rifle-bird.
	Dragoon-bird.
Mallee hen.	Regent-bird.
Land rail.	Nankeen night heron.
Curlew.	Magpie other than the black magpie.
Tallegalla or brush turkey.	Magpie, thrush, or peewit.

The eggs of such birds.

APPENDIX V.

NOTE E, PAGE 370.

THE following account of the Debate on the question of Privilege is extracted from the *Sydney Morning Herald* :—

Sir HENRY PARKES said: Mr. Speaker,—I consider it my duty to call the attention of the House to what may be regarded as a most unusual occurrence in our proceedings of yesterday. Of course, I shall be prepared to put myself right by concluding with a motion. The feature in our proceedings which I call an unusual occurrence consists in the explanation which was offered by the member for Camden, Mr. Garrett, and the subsequent explanation which was offered (hear, hear) by the member for the Upper Hunter, Mr. M'Elhone. We all of us recollect that when the hon. member for Camden was absent from this country a very grave charge was made against him of conduct during the time he was a Minister of the Crown, and I for one recollect, and I think, sir, that you must recollect in that chair, having heard the words that the Premier—meaning the member for St. Leonard's, Mr. Farnell,—had documents in his possession to prove these charges. These charges were of a character which, if proved, must necessarily ruin the hon. member to whom they referred. On the hon. member for Camden returning to this country, he took the course, which he described himself as the only proper course open to him, to vindicate his character, and he told us last night, on the authority of the opinions of three gentlemen who must be considered as the leading members of the Bar in this country, that he was restricted from proceeding

in his action to defend his character, and disprove these charges by the defendant in the case—the hon. member for the Upper Hunter, Mr. M'Elhone,—putting in a plea of his privileges as a member of this House. I, of course, have nothing to do with the proceedings of the hon. member for Camden, and I apprehend no hon. member has anything to do with that. But I think I may be pardoned in expressing my entire satisfaction, and I am sure I must represent other hon. members in that respect, that he lost no time in trying in the Supreme Court of the colony to sift these charges. (Cheers.) I have nothing to do, nor has any other hon. member much to do, with the rules by which the hon. member for the Upper Hunter chooses to govern his conduct, but we all have to do with this; we all have to do with the position of a member of this House (hear, hear) being used to destroy the position of some other person, whether a member of this House or one of the public out of doors; and then when that other person seeks the only course open to him by law to vindicate his character, and to disprove the charges made against him, the plea of a member of Parliament is set up as a bar. (Hear, hear.) Anxious as I am for the proper privileges being conceded to this House, to secure to it the utmost freedom of speech, I think it is a course of conduct so atrocious—(hear, hear)—so entirely and purely infamous—(hear, hear)—to abuse the privileges of Parliament for blasting the reputation, destroying the fortunes, ruining the family of any person, be he a member of this House, or the poorest person living out of doors, and then shrinking from the necessary consequence of this—(hear, hear)—I think the abuse of this power so utterly indefensible, so damnable in its nature, that it exhibits a desire to wound other persons' feelings without any desire to do any public good,—a desire to wreak cruelty upon persons without the slightest twinge of conscience as to the suffering it causes, and a kind of feeling that might belong to the lowest creature in the reptile part of creation—(hear, hear) —but only belongs to mankind in shrinking from the just consequences of these infamous charges. (Hear, hear.) We ought to consider whether the Standing Orders cannot be so amended as to prevent any person standing up here and making

charges against another unless he makes them in some form where evidence can be taken, where proof can be given, where the person charged may defend himself, and where, if the charges are not proved, the infamy shall recoil upon the reckless and unprincipled author. (Hear, hear.) I think, if we cannot do that, at least, until we can find some proper remedy, we ought once, and for ever, to refuse to hear these charges made, come from whatever lips they may in the future. Surely an hon. member, merely because he is a member of this Legislative Assembly, is not, on a motion for adjourning the House, to make these wild, and reckless, and cruel charges, and then to set up the plea, the shameful plea in this case—(hear, hear)—that he is protected by his privilege, when the person thus cruelly wronged seeks to vindicate his character in a Court of Justice. (Hear, hear.) I think I should fail altogether in my duty if I did not call attention to a case so obviously proved, so completely proved before us. [Mr. GREENWOOD: And move some resolution.] I am not prepared to take that course. I think I am fully justified in speaking, in order that hon. members may have their attention specially called to the subject—(hear, hear)—and may be prepared, when the time properly comes, for us to see in what way we can most effectually take steps to prevent this thing in the future. There are two courses that present themselves to my mind: the one is to amend the standing orders, so as not to allow any person, on a motion of adjournment, to attack another—(cheers)—that is fair and manly, and in accordance with every principle that is right and just—and that he should not be able to attack another, or bring a charge against another, unless he makes it in some form where the other will be heard, and where the charge can be proved or disproved. (Hear, hear.) These are two courses that seem to suggest themselves. But I think I should ill perform my duty if I made a motion without hon. members having time to deliberate within themselves; I think I should ill perform my duty if I did not take the first opportunity for calling attention to what has now taken place on clear proof, and which never did take place on this clear and conclusive proof before—that is, the proof that the person so charged sought to vindicate his

character, and the proof that the plea of Parliamentary privilege was set up as a bar to his vindication. We have never had these things proved before; but we have them proved now, and just in proportion to the outrage that may be committed will be the bending down to seek shelter from the consequences. If hon. members desire it, I shall conclude by making a motion. [Mr. M'ELHONE: I insist on your doing so.] The hon. member cannot insist on it, but I shall do it with the greatest willingness. [Mr. M'ELHONE: By the rules of the House you are bound to do so.] I am not bound to do anything of the kind, but I have intimated my perfect willingness to do it. [Captain ONSLOW: Don't rush this thing through the House as you did last night.] I do not know what the hon. and gallant member means, nor am I disposed to be diverted from the one object I have in view by any irrelevant remarks. (Cheers.) The object I have in view is sufficiently clear and important, and certainly is deserving the attention of every hon. member of the House. (Hear, hear.) In a special manner it is deserving the attention of those members who wish to preserve the character of the House. [Captain ONSLOW: And to cheer the hon. member for the Upper Hunter.] The hon. member himself, I am sorry to say, does not much contribute to that by his interruptions at any time, and I cannot understand the relevancy of his interruptions now. The case which I shall summarize now, in consequence of the interruptions, and which I want to call the attention of the House to, is that we have an hon. member making a charge of the darkest character—[Mr. M'ELHONE: Did you not do it in Twaddell's case?] I deny the relevancy of the interruptions. I never was in the position to which I call attention. What I wish to draw attention to is that we have an hon. member making a charge of the darkest character against another person—I do not care whether a member of this House or not; that other person seeks to vindicate his character in the Supreme Court of the country; and the person who has made this charge then sets up the plea of his Parliamentary privilege, and I say that that brings about a state of things which ought not to be allowed to go on without our taking some steps to prevent charges of this reckless character being

made in this wanton way for the future. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Mr. M'ELHONE said that Mr. Gray and Mr. Charles had charged the Colonial Secretary with abusing his position to rob the country by taking up coal land. Why did not the hon. member proceed against these hon. members?

Sir HENRY PARKES: That has no application to my case.

Mr. M'ELHONE said that he never was accused of going about the back slums to get information to damn Mr. Garrett's character; and when Mr. Dransfield came before the House the parties who brought him here would not give him an indemnity. The reason Mr. Garrett did not prosecute Sir Henry Parkes was because he knew that he could get nothing out of him. He recollected when Sir Henry Parkes cheered the statements he made about Mr. Garrett after that gentleman returned from Melbourne, and when they wanted to get Sir John Robertson out of office. He recollected Mr. Hoskins saying that he would not take the word of Sir John Robertson, and demanding that Mr. Garrett should leave office.

Sir HENRY PARKES: Does the hon. member say that he pleaded Parliamentary privilege?

Mr. M'ELHONE: The hon. member had done things that he would be ashamed to do. He had not robbed the widow and the orphan. He was never accused of robbing James Wilshire —of getting a promissory note for 4000*l.*, which he never paid—

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member is applying his words to any member of this House he is not in order.

Mr. M'ELHONE repeated that he was never accused of obtaining 4000*l.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member apply his words to any hon. member of this House?

Mr. M'ELHONE: I do not see how they can apply.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member intends his words to apply to any hon. member he is not in order.

Mr. M'ELHONE: I don't see how they can apply.

Sir HENRY PARKES: Chair! Chair!

Mr. SPEAKER: It is only on the assurance of the hon. member that he does not so apply them that he will be in order.

Mr. M'ELHONE had never been accused of robbing the widow and orphan.

Sir HENRY PARKES: Chair!

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member to assure the House that he is not applying these words to any hon. member of the House. If the hon. member does apply them to any member of this House he is clearly out of order, and cannot proceed.

Mr. M'ELHONE: I cannot see how they can apply.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then I understand the hon. member does not apply them?

Mr. M'ELHONE: I cannot say so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the hon. member is not in order.

Mr. M'ELHONE: Then I will not repeat it. He forgot the words used by Sir Alfred Stephen when Chief Justice, in regard to a prominent man whom he said ought to be at Cockatoo instead of walking the streets of Sydney. Sir Henry Parkes made the speech he had done this evening to curry favour with Mr. Garrett, and he never made worse charges against Mr. Garrett than Sir Henry Parkes had done in the Twaddell case. He had never gone to Mr. Barker to get declarations witnessed against Mr. Garrett. He had never made a statement in the Opposition room, which he had immediately afterwards denied in the House. What he had said in this House he could prove. He never said that Mr. Garrett had sold a situation, but what he said was that Mr. Garrett had borrowed money of Somers which he was not in a position to pay. He had no wish to rake this matter up again, but he might say that he had defended one action and won it, but, although he got a verdict, he had had to pay 200*l*. He had never lived on his position as a politician, borrowing money from people, thousands of pounds, and when asked to pay, had gone up King Street. He had never been charged with drawing two sorts of cheques, one marked for payment, and one which was not to be paid. Sir Henry Parkes could tell whether he had or not. If his character were 50,000 times as bad as it was, he would not change it for the

character of the hon. member at the head of the Government. The hon. member borrowed money of Mr. Scholey on more than one occasion, which he never paid.

Sir HENRY PARKES asked the Speaker to rule whether the hon. member, in explaining his own conduct in the matter which he had brought under the notice of the House, was in order in making charges against him, most of which were either wholly or in part unfounded, but to which he could not refer. The hon. member was aggravating the offence to which he had called the attention of the House.

Mr. M'ELHONE said that the question before the House was the adjournment, and said that it would be beneath him were he to notice the hon. member.

Captain ONSLOW thought the Premier had laid himself open to this line of reply by not moving a substantive motion.

Mr. SPEAKER said that great latitude was no doubt allowed on motions for adjournment. He had endeavoured at all times to put down charges against hon. members made on motions for adjournment. It was not in order for an hon. member to make charges against another hon. member on a motion for adjournment. That could only be done on a specific motion.

Mr. M'ELHONE did not wish to break through the Speaker's ruling. He was only defending himself.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member at the head of the government did not make any attack upon the hon. member, although, no doubt, his speech had direct reference to the hon. member. The initiation of the matter out of which this debate had arisen was in committee, and when it came before him in the House, on the personal explanation made by Mr. Garrett, he ruled: "I have on many occasions said that on a question for adjournment no hon. member is at liberty to attack another hon. member in the way in which the hon. member for the Upper Hunter is now attacking the hon. member for Camden. That can only be done in a specific motion. The hon. member is out of order in making these attacks under cover of a motion of adjournment." He had always held that ruling, and he had endeavoured to the utmost of his power to discourage these attacks. In regard to persons out of doors, he had no control,

because attacks on persons out of doors did not interfere with the freedom of debate; but he again said that these attacks on motion for adjournment were not in order.

Mr. M'ELHONE was very sorry that he should have again broken Mr. Speaker's ruling, and it was with no set purpose to do so. The hon. member did not like his past sins raked up, but there was nothing in his past life to call up the blush of shame. What had it to do with the hon. member—any plea that he might plead in the Supreme Court? He acted there not as a member of this House, and he did what he had a perfect right to do, and he would have been a fool if he had acted otherwise than he had done, when the hon. member was going about the city with Mr. Sutherland—

Sir HENRY PARKES appealed to the Speaker as to whether the hon. member was in order in making charges on a motion for adjournment.

Mr. FITZPATRICK: What is the point of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have decided two or three times that it is not in accordance with Parliamentary rule to make charges on a motion for adjournment.

Captain ONSLOW: The hon. member at the head of the government made a charge against the hon. member for the Upper Hunter.

Mr. SPEAKER did not hear him, and if the hon. member implied that he had ruled differently in regard to different hon. members, the hon. member must know very well that he had not done so. (Cheers.)

Captain ONSLOW: I certainly did not intend the observation to apply to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. M'ELHONE: The Premier had compared him to one of the vilest reptiles on the face of the earth.

Mr. SPEAKER understood the observation to have been made generally, and not by way of personal allusion. If he had understood it otherwise, he should have stopped the hon. member.

Mr. M'ELHONE challenged the hon. member to say that he did not use the words of him. He would sooner have the character of the poorest labouring man or woman than that of the hon. member. Sir Henry Parkes had gone about to get up charges against Mr. Garrett, and had said worse things of Sir

John Robertson than he had of Mr. Garrett. Sir Henry Parkes loved Mr. Garrett no more than the devil loved holy water. At heart the hon. member was afraid of Mr. Garrett going over to the Opposition. He should look up the whole of this matter between Sir Henry Parkes and Mr. Garrett. He was very much mistaken if Mr. Garrett had not the same opinion of Sir Henry Parkes as he had, and so had Mr. Gray, although he sat behind him and voted with him. They did not support Sir Henry Parkes because they loved him, but it was because of Sir John Robertson that they swallowed the leek.

Captain ONSLOW regretted very much that this question should have been raised upon a motion for adjournment. He agreed with every word that had fallen from the Colonial Secretary, and he was astonished that the hon. member for the Upper Hunter should have been cheered when he made his statement last night. It was unworthy of any one who had the honour of the House at heart. He could not understand this new-born love on the part of the Colonial Secretary for Mr. Garrett. There must be something behind that they did not know of, and the Colonial Secretary was so astute that it was impossible to know what his motives were. He was certain that it was not to clear Mr. Garrett's conduct that the Colonial Secretary had taken this course.

Mr. HUNGERFORD explained that the House had cheered the hon. member because he confessed, in an almost magnanimous manner, that he was not justified in making the attack upon Mr. Garrett that he did. He conceived that the Colonial Secretary was entitled to the thanks of the House for the steps he had taken to protect hon. members from the slanderous attacks made upon them.

Mr. BUCHANAN said he never saw the hon. member for Camden more correct than when he stated it was degrading to the House to have cheered the hon. member for the Upper Hunter, but he believed those cheers only came from one person. Here they had a man grossly libelling another man, and when he brought him into a court of law he was not man enough to face him. Instead of cheers, the author of such conduct ought to have been hooted from the Chamber. Was there a member of that House who did not respond in corroborative adherence to

every word uttered by the Colonial Secretary in denunciation of such baseness? Not only did he slander a person in this way, but he said another person had the proofs of it in his pocket. And then, when Mr. Garrett was so aggrieved that he had no means to defend himself, but had to bring the other before a tribunal of his country, that other, when he had an opportunity of substantiating his charges, put in a cowardly plea of privilege to stop all inquiry, and prevent the person whom he had libelled from vindicating his character. A man who exhibited himself in such a character as that ought to be hooted and scouted out of society everywhere he went. It was a most degrading and humiliating position, especially when that person rose and seemed so utterly insensible of the degradation of the position he occupied. This hon. member seemed to think very little about libelling men, because he confessed, as if it were a species of merit, that he had libelled several others—as if it were nothing —and saying that he did not say it of Mr. Garrett. Why did he not go to Mr. Garrett's solicitors and make an apology for it? [Mr. M'ELHONE: I wanted to get you a brief.] That would have been a candid, upright way of dealing with the matter; but, instead of doing this, he went and put in this wretched plea of privilege. He did not wish to exceed any of the rules of that House, but he would just put this before them:— Suppose they were to encounter in any Assembly in the world— say in the British Parliament, if that were possible—a low-bred, ignorant, illiterate ruffian, destitute alike of truth and common rectitude, and wholly unable to understand the meaning of either; whose very nature was made up of falsehood and malice —a living, moving, incarnated lie; whose whole public action was occupied in the basest slander of better men than himself; who publicly proclaims himself a liar, with an utter insensibility to the accompanying degradation; who, when met by one of his fellow-representatives whom he had insulted with "Hold up your hands, you mean, despicable coward, and I will strike you to my foot and trample your base unworthy carcase under it!" crawls away from the encounter in the spirit of a craven and a dastard; who stands pilloried in the universal opinion as a common slandermonger and a dealer in falsehood, and who, when dragged

before the tribunals to answer for his vile calumnies, basely shelters himself behind the cowardly plea of privilege. He asked what more appropriate treatment could you offer such a ruffian than to allow him to sink out of sight, deep in your contempt, covered with your scorn, and enveloped in the hatred and detestation of all true men.

Mr. GREENWOOD rose to order. The hon. member was making use of terms which, if applied to any member of that House, was likely to lead to great disorder.

Mr. SPEAKER said if the hon. member applied this language to any member of that House he was grossly disorderly, but he certainly understood the hon. member to say, "Suppose any member of the House of Commons." If the hon. member applied the words to any member of that Assembly, he was grossly exceeding the rules of debate.

Mr. M'ELHONE: Never mind. Anything he says is quite harmless.

Mr. DAY said there could be no doubt whatever that the hon. member for Mudgee was applying these words to the hon. member for the Upper Hunter. He did think language like this ought not to be used in that House.

Mr. O'CONNOR said he did not think the House would have to regret the Colonial Secretary's having moved the adjournment, and he thought every member present would endorse the sentiments of the Colonial Secretary so far as concerned his pointing out the cowardly character of any man who would avail himself of his position there to slander men outside. He never saw any man in that House so badly treated as the hon. member for Camden had been. That gentleman had been a very valuable member of that House. No matter what the subject might be, Mr. Garrett was able to shed a lustre and a light and a luminosity on all questions. (Laughter.) And the Colonial Secretary was right in defending him. But they found this fact: Mr. M'Elhone had made an act of contrition. Had the Colonial Secretary done so? He paused for a reply. (Renewed laughter.) The hon. member for Mudgee had pointed out the cowardly nature of the attack made upon Mr. Garrett in that House. This from a man who had made the wildest attacks upon the Lord Bishop of

Sydney, and who had accused the head of the Wesleyan denomination of robbing the public purse. What would this sort of thing be considered in the House of Commons? It was impossible to conceive of a man occupying a position in the House of Commons who would be such an embodiment of meanness and cowardice as the hon. member for Mudgee.

Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. member was now applying these expressions to a member of that House, and he was clearly out of order in doing so.

Mr. O'CONNOR bowed to the ruling of the chair, but he wished to point out that the man who stood up there and denounced these attacks was himself the greatest sinner. And they knew how Mr. Garrett had been attacked in the most cowardly manner by the Colonial Secretary. He said: Let the Colonial Secretary do as the hon. member for the Upper Hunter had done, and make an apology to the hon. member for Camden, who was one of the most valuable members that had ever been here. He was delighted that this question had been opened, and he only trusted that the doctrines that had this evening been laid down would be fully carried out.

Mr. H. HURLEY said that during the time he had been in this House he had never witnessed a more humiliating spectacle than that presented by the hon. member for the Upper Hunter, who came here and admitted and apologized for having maligned, not only the hon. member for Camden, Mr. Garrett, but also many other hon. members.

Mr. M'ELHONE said he had never said he had made an apology. He appealed to the Speaker, if the hon. member was in order.

The SPEAKER ruled, that if any previous statements were alluded to, they must be correctly quoted.

Mr. HURLEY read the report of what Mr. M'Elhone had said, and said he took it from that that the hon. member had apologized.

Mr. M'ELHONE: I don't admit the statements I made were untrue, and I made no apology.

Mr. HURLEY said he understood the hon. member had apologized; at all events, it was quite certain there was no hon. gentleman who took his gruel so badly, and no one so ready to say things regarding other members. It was a free fight fought,

and in place of doing harm would do good. The hon. member had made charges against Mr. Garrett that were both unjustifiable and untrue. The hon. member had distinctly said Mr. Farnell had in his possession documentary evidence sufficient to damn the character of the hon. member for Camden. He had attended on Mr. Wangenheim to see that documentary evidence, and there was not one tittle to show that Mr. Garrett was in any way connected with Mr. Somers in regard to the sale of a billet. The documents showed that a certain office had been disposed of, but there was nothing to show that Mr. Garrett was connected with Mr. Somers, and, as far as he was concerned, he saw nothing that implicated Mr. Garrett.

Mr. M'ELHONE: You saw enough to convince you though that Somers sold a billet.

Mr. HURLEY said that Mr. Wangenheim, on his oath, said that Somers had received a sum of money for procuring an appointment in the Lands Office, and there was no doubt that Somers did act as an agent, a political agent, in procuring Government situations and receiving pecuniary rewards. He regretted that his name had been drawn into this affair, and he could not help feeling that it was extremely reprehensible when an hon. gentleman admits that he has spoken when his temper had got the better of him, and when he looses his temper again to make most malicious remarks with reference to persons in this Chamber. There was nothing worse than for an hon. member to take up cudgels against the private life of another. It seemed, however, that those hon. members who made such attacks could not themselves stand scourging. He sincerely trusted that some measure would be passed to prevent these slanderous expressions being used when they are untrue, and when they are sympathized with by hon. gentlemen merely because they sit on the same side of the House. He said that, whether in Opposition or not, they should never attempt to shield an hon. member when he makes unwarrantable charges against another hon. member.

Mr. GRAY said the hon. member for the Upper Hunter had persistently accused him of having charged the Premier with committing a public robbery. He most emphatically denied that, but he did say that Sir Henry Parkes, Mr. John Suther-

land, Sir James Martin, Mr. Butler, and a host of others, who had selected public lands while they were Ministers of the Crown, had acted illegally, and he believed he was right in saying that.

Mr. M'ELHONE: Sir Henry Parkes and your brother-in-law were nearly fighting over the table about it.

Mr. GRAY said that he had not considered that Ministers had done the correct thing in selecting, and that matter he had brought before the House, not as a charge, but to have it stopped. But the hon. member, in attempting to defend himself, himself charged other hon. members with slander; and it appeared as if he had suffered severely from the expressions made use of regarding him. He thought the hon. gentleman's feelings, however, would be the worst punishment that could be inflicted on him. He had been accused of supporting the Government after he had made charges against them which he denied having made. He supported this Government in just the same way as he had supported the last Government, and when, as was the case with the last Government, he could not justify their actions he would vote against them. Before he sat down he could not help congratulating the hon. member for Camden. He remembered when the hon. member for the Upper Hunter so unjustly attacked him, and attacked him so as not to give him a fair chance of reply, and therefore it was that he endorsed every word that had fallen from the hon. the Colonial Secretary. He thought that the hon. member, who was not prepared to substantiate the charge he made in the Supreme Court, ought never to have made the charge at all in this Chamber. If the charge had been substantiated in the Supreme Court, no damages could have been given against him, and there would have been no necessity for his pleading privilege, and hence he thought that the language used by the Colonial Secretary was justified. He hoped, however, that the matter would not drop here. Already it had done great service in being brought forward, for it was high time that this House should pass a resolution condemning the manner in which not only hon. members' characters have been dealt with, but also the reckless way in which unfortunate people outside had been dealt with. Hon. members might blast the character of people outside without these people having any redress, and hon. members knowing they were

protected in that way, ought to be the more careful how they spoke. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would follow the matter up, and put a stop to this reckless manner of making charges without any attempt to substantiate them. Members must be protected in their speeches, but it seemed to him that having that protection was a cause why something ought to be done to prevent the abuse of privilege.

Mr. GREENWOOD said he could not think anything more reprehensible on the part of the head of the Government than that he should have taken the course he had without submitting a definite motion, and on the only evening for private business that they had too. To a man of honour nothing could be more excruciating than that he should be subjected to charges, and when he attempts to put them to the proof finds that there is a shrinking away from the test. This was not a matter only between the hon. member for Camden and the hon. member for the Upper Hunter; and whatever the merits of the case between the two hon. gentlemen, it was for this House to ascertain whether the charge was true, and if so, punish the member who sold the office, and if not punish the slanderer who had dared to utter such a slander. They had lost the Privilege Bill, and by the highest legal authority they were told that such a matter could not be tested in the law courts, and it could not be tested in this House, where no power existed to summon witnesses. He sympathized greatly with the hon. member for Camden that such charges should be made, and yet when he did his best to put them both to the test, he finds he cannot.

Mr. FARNELL said the subject was an important one, and was in effect whether members were able to slander others without being brought to the test. They knew now that members were privileged as to the language they used both regarding people inside and outside the House. That being the case, no hon. member could obtain redress against another who chose to make charges against him. He thought, therefore, there should be some action to remedy this state of matters. He was not going to discuss the Privileges Bill at present, but he thought the hon. the Colonial Secretary had made a mistake in calling the attention of the House to the matter, and reviving what had taken place on the previous evening. He admitted that a remedy

was required, but was this the right way to do it by moving the adjournment of the House? Either a resolution or a bill should have been brought in.

Mr. WISDOM said that it would not be disputed that the privileges of Parliament should be defined. He thought there should be liberty of speech, but those who made charges wantonly should be made responsible for them outside. It had been decided that many privileges we thought we enjoyed, and were enjoyed by the House of Commons, in reality we did not. It could be no benefit to any one to discuss the private character of any member of this House. If the hon. member could have proceeded further they might have got a decision from the Court here, and if it were thought that the Court had decided improperly, the Privy Council in England would have settled the dispute as to what was the right of speech held by members of the Assembly. Unfortunately that had not been obtained; and now, taking all things into consideration, it was the duty of the Government, very early next session, to introduce a bill which would place beyond all doubt what not only were the rights and privileges of the Assembly as such, but what were the rights of members in the House, and people out of doors.

Mr. GARRETT said, with regard to the matters submitted by the hon. member for Morpeth, he wished to point out that it was utterly impossible for him to take any other course but what he did take. (Hear, hear.) He made a declaration, and was met by a certain plea. The opinion of his counsel was taken in reference to this plea, and by those opinions he was bound. He did not see that he could have acted differently in any way. He took the only course open to him, and the only person who barred that course was the person who made the charges. He had nothing whatever to do with this matter being brought before the House to-night. [Sir HENRY PARKES: Hear, hear.] He was quite content to let the facts and circumstances speak for themselves. From this time forward he should consider himself as utterly cleared from the charges involved in this case, and from others of a similar character. He had done all he could, and he was not going to let these slanders against his character in public and private life stand as they had done up to the present time.

Sir HENRY PARKES, in reply, said his object had been to call attention on the first day after the occurrence to what was entirely new in our proceedings—(hear, hear)—bad and irregular as sometimes they had been; and it was singular how entirely the object of his rising had been misunderstood by the hon. gentleman mostly concerned. He did not rise to abuse the hon. member, nor to please the hon. member for Camden, but to call attention to the fact that a gentleman who, in this House, had been most conspicuous in trying to take away men's characters, when he was met by the only means within men's power of ever making him prove his assertions or punishing him, set up his privileges of member of Parliament as a bar to the other obtaining justice. That had never been done before, and that was the one fact that called upon us to take some step to put a stop to this licensed system of slander, or rather privileged system of slander. As to the hon. member for Camden he had never approached the hon. member in any way to seek his support or propitiate him. [Mr. GARRETT: Hear, hear.] He had only discharged his duty, though he admitted he had only in part discharged his duty. (Hear, hear.) He would follow this matter up (hear, hear,) and allow the House an opportunity for putting a stop to this system of privileged slander, whether the persons slandered were members of this House or persons out of doors. He called attention to it in order that hon. members might give attention to it and be prepared to give effect to what he apprehended was the feeling of everybody on an occurrence of this kind. It was no use his attempting to repeat what he had said before, but he could not find language sufficiently strong to characterize a charge made against anybody without sufficient inquiry, and an entire shrinking from the responsibility of that charge. (Hear, hear.) That sort of thing certainly ought not to exist. (Hear, hear.) He entirely concurred in every word that fell from the hon. member for Morpeth, and he believed that while we ought to be clothed with ample privileges to protect ourselves, we ought not to be clothed with privileges to assault the characters of innocent persons out of door. (Cheers.)

The motion for adjournment was negatived on division by 18 to 13.

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